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FOR FIFTEEN YEARS, THE LESBIAN AND GAY WEEKLY

Mandatory testing looms in Rhode Island

The state's governor and health director are pushing the nation's most Draconian HIV testing measure, which especially targets women, people of color and the poor

By Elizabeth Pincus

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — The Rhode Island legislature is currently considering a bill that would mandate HIV antibody testing for all prison inmates, as well as for anyone convicted of prostitution, IV drug use, or possession of IV drug paraphernalia. The measure, supported by Gov. Edward DiPrete and State Health Director H. Denman Scott, also calls for "routine" testing of hospital patients, marriage license applicants, and people attending drug treatment programs, prenatal clinics, or sexually transmitted disease clinics.

Some AIDS activists call this legislation the most repressive and tyrannical attempt in the U.S. to impose testing for HIV, the virus widely thought to cause AIDS.

"Mandatory testing of anyone is unconscionable," said Diane Cook, a former member of the Governor's Advisory Council on AIDS, who resigned from her post last month when the council voted not to oppose

the bill. "Racism, sexism and classism currently guide the decisions about whom to scapegoat in this epidemic. We must fight the state's opening move because if we are silent now, the program will definitely roll onward. In the foreseeable future, the state will require that HIV test results be reported to the Health Department by name, and the state will require contact tracing."

Ken Fish, president of the Rhode Island Project/AIDS board of directors, also expressed outrage over the proposal. He explained that the Governor's AIDS Council, which was assembled late last year, initially opposed mandatory HIV testing in a recommendation for a state AIDS bill submitted in February. But Health Director Scott — who also chairs the Governor's AIDS Council — altered the proposal just before presenting it to the governor and legislature. Scott's amended bill also includes controversial

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Hate crimes bill passes House

Anti-gay violence provision survives amendment process, but the measure faces a tough Senate battle

By Chris Bull

WASHINGTON — The U.S. House of Representatives May 20 passed anti-hate crime legislation that includes language addressing homophobic violence despite efforts by Rep. George Gekas (R-Pa.) to exclude the sexual orientation provision in the bill. The measure passes by a landslide 383-29 vote.

Gekas succeeded, however, in watering down the sexual orientation provision and inserting a disclaimer which reads "This is not a gay rights bill." Still, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force lobbyist Kevin Berrill called the vote "historic.... This is the first time Congress has favorably addressed an issue of such importance to the lesbian and gay community."

Gekas argued that the original language of the bill, which mandates reporting of hate-inspired crime based on "race, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation," was vague and led down the slippery slope to compiling statistics on people who have sex with children and animals. He offered and amendment which would have stricken the sexual orientation provision from the bill. Berrill explained that the House eventually voted overwhelmingly to accept a compromise amendment introduced by John Miller (R-Wash.) which substituted "homosexuality or heterosexuality" in place of "sexual orientation." The compromise, said Berrill, "in no way minimizes

the impact of the bill. It simply made it more palatable to the House and provided the huge margin of victory."

A similar bill was recently introduced in the Senate by Alan Cranston (D-Calif.). Berrill said the bill faces an uphill battle in the Senate.

The lesbian and gay provision in the hate crimes legislation was endorsed by a broad coalition of groups working for the bill's passage, including The National Black Police Officers Association, the American Baptist Church, The United Church of Christ, the Jewish Defense League and the American Psychoanalytic Association. According to Berrill, several groups threatened to withdraw support for the bill if the lesbian and gay provision was eliminated.

"The coalition is very exciting. It lays important groundwork for the future. Non-gay organizations for the first time lobbied with us. This was the first time, for example, we had worked with the Jewish community or law enforcement groups," said Berrill. Many states are in the process of adopting hate-crime bills and considering how to combat prejudice in the public schools and police departments. Berrill said the overwhelming House vote would send an important message to the states to include provisions for the lesbian and gay community.

□ filed from Boston



BETWEEN THE LINES

BUILDING AN ASIAN LESBIAN COMMUNITY

Harsh sentences slapped on two Supreme Court CDers

'Our justice system is more interested in controlling lesbians and gay men than prosecuting queer-bashers'

By Chris Bull

WASHINGTON — When Alexander Willis decided to participate in the October 13 lesbian and gay civil disobedience (CD) at the Supreme Court, he figured he would pay a small fine and be home in time to attend classes the next day in Baltimore. Instead, Willis, who has no previous arrest record, was sentenced by a Superior Court Judge on April 8 to one year of supervised probation, 100 hours of community service, and a \$100 fine, an unusually harsh penalty for CD.

Still, said Willis, he would do it again. "It is necessary to demonstrate to the government and the authorities that we are a minority that will no longer accept second-class citizenship and we are willing to make sacrifices to get that point across."

Judge Richard Salzman found Willis and Michael McDonagh guilty of "demonstrating without a permit" and "unlawful crossing of a police line." Willis and McDonagh were among an estimated 800 protesters arrested at what observers say was the largest act of CD since the anti-war protests of the early 1970s. The arrests occurred two days after over 650,000 gay men and lesbians marched on the nation's capital.

The Supreme Court demonstrators publicly demanded a repeal of the homophobic *Hardwick* decision, which upheld Georgia's sodomy law. "Lesbians and gay men are unprotected in the Constitution and we wanted to address this situation," said Nancy Alach, a Boston organizer of the action.

The March On Washington (MOW) and the civil disobedience touched off a surge of organizing around the country with an increasing emphasis on grassroots activism. Direct action groups such as New York's ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) credit the MOW with bringing a new generation of activists into the community.

However, long-time lesbian and gay activists have begun to debate how to best focus the new energy. According to Jessica Shubow, who monitored the arrests from the MOW office, the government is increasingly adept at deflecting attempts to draw attention to its mistreatment of minorities. Either by refusing to arrest protesters who trespass or by singling out protesters for harsh punishment, the government attempts to discourage CD. "The government has learned to diffuse the excitement of civil disobedience that exposes the intransigence of the State. We have to come up with new strategies. We must be clear, focused and consistent, never allowing ourselves to be bored or divided," said Shubow. She added that the Supreme Court demonstration is an example of CD at its best.

Leonard Graff, attorney for Willis and legal director of National Gay Rights Advocates (NGRA), said he saw no "rhyme or reason" to the singling out of Willis and McDonagh from the 800 arrested at the CD. "The government simply decided they had to make an example of these people. Considering the symbolic nature of the crime, the sentence was unnecessarily harsh. The government has scapegoated [Willis]," said Graff. He said in cases where there is no previous record of arrests, no personal injury or destruction of property, supervised probation — Willis must report to a probation officer periodically — is extremely unusual. Willis told *GCN* he plans to spend his community service hours at the Baltimore People With AIDS Coalition.

Organizers of the CD decried the harsh sentences. "Our justice system is often more interested in controlling lesbians and gay men and squelching protest than pro-

Continued on page 3

NEWSNOTES

Quote of the week

"PWAs have literally gotten up out of bed and pushed for care that manages the disease. We are getting out of the process of dying and getting into the process of fighting to live."

— PWA Steven Rose, describing his involvement in the ACT UP movement.

Healing AIDS, Healing Ourselves

BOSTON — Jason Serinus, editor of *Psychoimmunity and the Healing Process* (Celestial Arts), will present a seminar in Boston at the Club Cabaret at Club Cafe on May 24 at 7:30pm. Suggested donation is \$15.

Jason is a massage therapist and healer who has been speaking nationally on holistic approaches to healing AIDS since 1983. He knows that people can heal themselves of AIDS and other life-threatening diseases.

His Boston seminar will speak to the heart of the healing process, exploring the concept of psychoimmunity, our capacity to unite our minds with our bodies in the transcendence of dis-eases such as AIDS and cancer. It will conclude with an extended visualization, using resonant healing tone, which empowers us to access our own innate abilities to heal ourselves. This workshop is open to all individuals interested in the healing process and applying it to both participants and others.

MetroHealing is part of Boston Healing Circles and is also open to all. The group meets at the aerobics room of the Metropolitan Health Club, Sunday nights, 7:30-9:30. In the future, it hopes to bring more people to Boston, including Tom O'Connor, author of *Living with AIDS*; Irene Smith, a massage teacher in San Francisco working with PWAs; and Caroline Myss, involved in channeling in the New Hampshire area and author of *AIDS: Passageway to Transformation*.

If you would like more information about the Jason Serinus seminar, call Brian at (617) 267-1154 or Joseph at (617) 357-6926. For more information on the Boston Healing Circles, call (617) 426-9205.

□ Brian Cummings

Women excluded from AIDS drug trials

NEW YORK — As the number of women with AIDS increases, so does awareness that women are barred from many of the experimental drug programs in which men with AIDS find hope. According to a recent article in the *Village Voice*, five of the thirteen drug trials in New York City that are relevant to women are available only to men. Most of the trials that are open to women are for AZT, while the most hopeful drugs for the future are all given to men only.

Many explanations have been given for women's exclusion from drug trials, a practice which began long before AIDS. Researchers have long argued that trial subjects should be as homogenous as possible, and that women's hormonal changes mean that their reactions to drugs are less predictable than men's. There is also more concern about reproductive damage in women than in men, and frequently any woman in her childbearing years is excluded from treatment whether or not she plans to become pregnant. The result is often that drugs are licensed by the FDA for treatment of both men and women without ever having been tested on women, as is the case with AZT.

In the case of AIDS treatments, the situation is even more complicated. "Women are being excluded," explained Mathilde Krim, who heads AmFAR, the American Foundation for AIDS Research, "because of the assumption by doctors that they are IV drug users and therefore undesirable patients." But CDC statistics indicate that less than half of the women with AIDS are current or former IV drug users, and many of those who may have acquired the disease through IV use are now recovered users.

Women with AIDS are also much more likely than men to be Black or Latina: 63 percent of men with AIDS are white compared to only 28 percent of the women. In

general, women tend not to have the same social and financial access to health care, and women with AIDS in particular tend not to have access to the strong network created by the gay community to provide emotional and practical support and distribute information about new treatments. And, in 1988, women with AIDS live an average of 298 days after diagnosis while men live an average of 400 days.

□ Lori Kenschaft

Send in your proposals for a piece of the March surplus

WASHINGTON — Proposals are now being accepted by the Executive Committee of the March on Washington from groups that want to partake of the \$70,000 in surplus funds garnered for the event. (See GCN, Vol. 15, No.24.)

Proposals for amounts up to \$5000 can be submitted by lesbian, gay or AIDS-related projects that have national or state significance. At least half of the recipients will be lesbians, and a quarter will be people of color, according to the Executive Committee. Preference will be given to "grassroots projects, projects born of March organizing and projects working toward one or more of the March demands."

Proposals should include: the organization name, with proof of tax status if applicable; contact names, addresses and phone numbers of at least three people representing the diversity of your project organizers; the purpose of the organization, with a brief history, description of the current structure, long range plans and any other relevant information; the organizer composition of your group, giving the percentage of organizers/members who are people of color, women and from other constituencies (PWAs, seniors, youth, etc.); and the project description, with details about its goal, timeline and an itemized budget which should include other anticipated revenues. (If the grant is for seed money, explain how the project will be funded after the grant is spent.)

Send proposals by June 1 to the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, P.O. Box 7781, Washington, D.C. 20044. For further information, contact Executive Committee members Pat Norman (415-783-1828), Kay Ostberg (202-347-9600) or Steve Ault (718-499-8984).

□ Jennie McKnight

Les/gay dems will have hand in convention action

ATLANTA, Ga. — Gay men and lesbians will be active participants in the July Democratic Convention. Three activists have been appointed to the platform committee and three to the rules and credentials committee, according to the *Columbus News*. In addition, local activists are slated for delegate positions in at least 20 states.

To facilitate lesbian and gay involvement in party activities, the Democratic National Committee has issued a flyer titled "1988 Democratic National Convention: An Opportunity for Gays and Lesbians to Participate in the Delegate Selection Process."

The platform committee members are Carole Migden, chair of the San Francisco Democratic Party and former president of the Harvey Milk Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club; Dale McCormick, chair of the Maine Lesbian and Gay Democratic party; Terje Anderson, member of the executive committee of the National Association of Gay and Lesbian Democratic Clubs (NAGLDC); Representative Barney Frank (D-Mass.); Tom Duane of the NAGLDC; and Ron Squires, the Vermont Democratic Vice Chair, who will serve on the rules and credentials committee.

□ Lori Kenschaft

NEWSNOTES COMPILED BY
JENNIE MCKNIGHT

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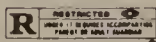
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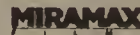
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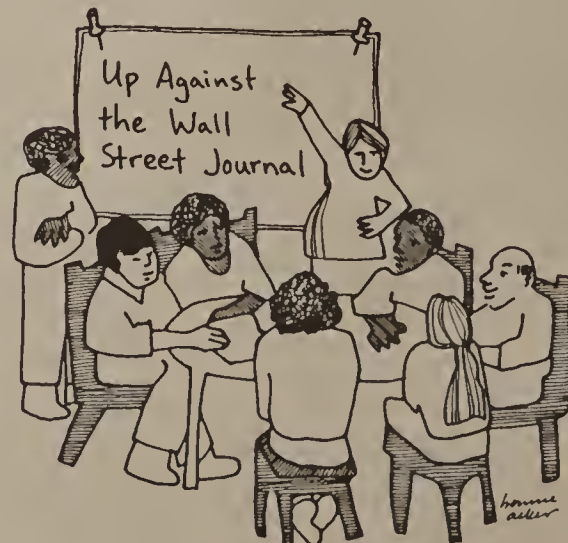
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SUMMER INSTITUTE 1988 runs from July 30–August 5. Cost, including room and board, tuition, and recreational facilities, is \$300–\$500 depending on income. Scholarships and daycare available. People of color particularly encouraged to apply. Deadline for application is July 15.

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Harsh

Continued from page 1

secuting people who queer-bash and perpetrate hate-crimes. It's a misdirection of the system," said Sarah Holmes, a Boston organizer of the event.

Graff said NGRA plans to appeal Willis' sentence. Graff and District of Columbia civil rights attorney Nina Kraut said the appeal will be based on a "necessity" defense. The lawyers will argue that Willis would have risked greater personal harm as a result of the discriminatory *Hardwick* decision had he stayed away from the protest.

Most of the 800 arrested pleaded guilty and paid a \$50 fine. Fifty-one others spent 48 hours in jail. Many had their charges dropped when prosecutors failed to provide police witnesses. "People were willing to make some payment for their action short of a long trial. The sentences for [Willis and McDonagh] were above and beyond what anyone should expect to pay," said Holmes.

Sue Hyde of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and a CD organizer, said CD is safest in large numbers. "Most people were released simply because we clogged up the system. The whole situation was wildly chaotic. The court system simply could not handle the load. But once we are separated out we are vulnerable," said Hyde. The MOW office was able to track nearly 500 of those arrested, and was successful at monitoring their treatment by police and the courts. Shubow said the monitoring effort even received important information from an anonymous supporter inside the courthouse. "It was very exciting. We had mid-

night meetings in back alleys to exchange information," said Shubow.

Still, several women were subjected to pelvic and other medical examinations and strip searches by police. Kraut plans a multi-million dollar lawsuit against the city on behalf of the women to "halt forced body cavity searches." She said one of the women suffered internal damage as a result of the examination.

The government prosecutes people arrested for protesting "voraciously," observed Kraut, who has defended hundreds of people arrested for CD. "They go to enormous effort and expense to prosecute CD cases." She said each case costs taxpayers at least \$100,000 and can take up to six weeks of court time. The government prosecutes under the assumption that it must "deter" CD, Kraut said, "deterrence is irrelevant to most of these people. They have a cause."

Most legal defenses for CD are not looked upon favorably by the courts, explained Kraut. She said it would "take a miracle" to successfully raise the necessity defense in D.C. "Maybe if someone entered a burning house to save a child the person would be acquitted of trespassing. Otherwise there is no chance," said Kraut.

The government treats people who engage in CD much more harshly than "non-political" trespassers, according to Kraut. "If someone walked into my office and I had to call the police to have him removed — if it was a first-time offender — he would no doubt be released immediately. The same is almost never true for people who trespass for a cause," said Kraut.

□ filed from Boston

joey Branden, 27, dies at home in Boston

*well boss i saw
mehitabel the cat the other day
and she was looking a little
thin and haggard
with a limp in
the hind leg on the starboard
side old feline animal i said
how is tricks still in the
ring archy she said and still a
lady in spite of h dash double l
always jolly archy she said in
spite of hard luck
toujours gai is the word
archy toujours gai*

— Don Marquis, 1917

By Tom Wilson Weinberg

BOSTON — joey Branden, born Joseph Cloyd, September 13, 1960, in Muncie, Indiana, died at his home in Boston on April 18, 1988. A graduate of Emerson College (BFA in Acting, 1984), joey was an all-around person of the theater. joey was a strong presence on the local theater scene and worked as a legal word processor at the Boston law firm of Csaplar and Bok.

In late 1984, joey conceived the idea for a gay and lesbian musical revue *Ten Percent Revue*. When the show opened at the Arlington Street Church in March, 1985, he was a member of the original company. That same year he co-produced and played a featured role in *Star Spangled Revue*, a musical revue based on live radio broadcasts of the 1940s.

joey was diagnosed with AIDS in July, 1986. From that time until his death, joey continued to lead an energetic and highly creative life. Fulfilling a lifelong ambition, in 1987 he revived *archy and mehitabel*, a Broadway musical of the '50s. With a cast and crew of talented volunteers, the show raised thousands of research dollars for Deaconness Hospital.

In the spring of 1987, joey mounted a new production of *Ten Percent Revue* for a summer-long run in Provincetown, Massachusetts, often directing from a bed in the rehearsal room and sometimes calling from his hospital room with ideas and instructions.

In between theatrical endeavors he successfully recovered from four episodes of pneumocistis pneumonia and numerous other AIDS-related illnesses. He frequently appeared on talk-shows as a gay man with AIDS, and he participated in a photography project documenting the lives of people with AIDS.

joey was cast in the role of Tommy in Boston's Triangle Theater's production of *The Normal Heart*, but poor health forced



joey Branden

him to leave the production just prior to opening. With his typical determination, he travelled to the March on Washington in October. In December, in a loving gesture to the *Ten Percent Revue* company, he left his sickbed to attend a performance of the show.

joey took charge of the details of his own illness. He left no unfinished business between himself and those close to him; he described his life as very full and said his only regret was that he never got to Paris.

joey is survived by his loving friends Mark Dapolito and Barry Sullivan and by his parents, Everett and Zana Cloyd, with whom he had a mutually adoring relationship. He is also survived by his brother Casey Cloyd of Indianapolis and his lifelong friend Dane Vanatter.

A memorial service will be held on Sunday, June 12, at 6:00 at Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street, Boston. At 7:30 that same evening, joey's friends will stage a performance in his memory at the New Erlich Theatre, 551 Tremont St. The public is invited to both of these events.

An announcement of a fund in joey's memory will be forthcoming from his parents and friends. Once established, the fund will help people with AIDS meet the expenses incurred by their choice of being at home rather than in the hospital.

joey instructed that his ashes be distributed in six locations: his garden plot in the Fenway, his beloved Provincetown, San Francisco, his parents' home in Muncie, his grandparents' farm in Kentucky, and Paris. □

60,000 queers expected for Pride in Beantown

Out of the closet and onto the Common

By Elizabeth Pincus

BOSTON — Gay and lesbian Pride season is just around the bend, in the 19th year since the Stonewall uprisings in New York set fire to the movement for lesbian/gay liberation. Boston organizers expect a crowd of over 60,000 to jam downtown streets on June 11 to participate in the Pride Day parade and rally. With the recent surge in AIDS activism, the politically charged climate of an election year and the renewed energy stirred at October's March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, Pride events everywhere could carry a strong political punch this year. The 1988 theme, "Rightfully Proud," will be echoed in most lesbian/gay pride celebrations around the globe.

For the first time since the Hub's inaugural Pride parade in 1970, three weeks of lesbian and gay revelry will be planned around the actual day of Pride. Dubbed Pridefest '88, the series of events runs from May 27 through June 19 in what Pride Committee Co-chair Matthew Hayes calls a "month-long lesbian and gay First Night." A kick-off party is planned for the Skylight Galleries at 43 Charles Street on May 27. Community groups have been asked to schedule events to broaden the scope of Pridefest '88, which concludes with the Boston exhibition of the NAMES Project AIDS memorial quilt the weekend of June 18.

"We always try to get organizations in town to take on parts of the celebration," said Hayes, who shares Pride Committee leadership with Co-chair Janet Kyle. "In effect it's a 'potluck Pride.' We are doing our best to represent the diversity of the community and make Pride comfortable for everyone. As we expand our efforts, we hope to become even better."

About 12 regular volunteers work on the Pride Committee, which meets year round. Participants explained that although involvement on the committee is fairly fluid, for the past few years only about 30 percent of the group has been women. Several men from the Boston chapter of Black and White Men Together (BWMT) have worked on the

committee, but participation by people of color has usually been low and no specific outreach efforts are made to increase involvement. Pride public relations coordinator Sharla Clos said that announcements about committee meetings are distributed throughout the lesbian and gay community, and that new members are always welcome. According to Hayes, an attempt to reflect community diversity has been ventured in planning speakers and entertainers for the Pride rally.

Catherine Lohr, a co-chair of the 1987 Pride Committee, said that efforts to include people of color and people of different physical abilities in Pride planning were not always as successful as desired. However, she said she believed that "movers and shakers" were involved who would keep alive the political component and progressive vision of Pride Day. "I'm from the rabble rousing school," Lohr said. "There's an appropriate reason to party and reasons for exhilaration, but there's also a tremendous opportunity for political power [at Pride]. It's important to try and harness that power and hang on to our vision."

The biggest glitch in planning this year's Pride extravaganza is a clash in scheduling. Organizers discovered about six weeks ago that the Democratic State Convention will be held at the Boston Garden on the same day as Pride. According to Hayes, confirming speakers for the rally has been difficult, since many of those invited are planning to attend the political convention. He explained that Convention organizers said they may push back the starting time for the Convention to avoid interfering with Pride. Even so, Hayes said that few prospective speakers have made definite commitments to appear at the Pride rally.

Those who have confirmed to speak include Boston City Councilor David Scondras, the mayor's liaison to the lesbian/gay community, Ann Sanders, and Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.). Hayes said the Pride Committee has sought speakers from communities of color and other groups, in-

Continued on page 7

Rhode Island

Continued from page 1

provisions about housing and insurance.

"The bill is onerous and totally unacceptable," Fish said. "Mandatory testing is not an effective public health measure, plus, prison inmates who are HIV-positive or perceived to be HIV-positive already receive such abysmally poor, inhumane treatment from [the Department of] Corrections. We constantly get letters from prisoners about the lack of information or AIDS treatments available to them. How can you test them and put them into that even more untenable situation?"

Cook said that Scott's proposed bill "flew in the face" of what the council had suggested, without regard for the "wealth of information available in medical and other journals which indicates that mandatory and routine testing is poor public health policy." She spelled out the consequences that could result from mandatory testing: potential breach of confidentiality, almost inevitable discrimination, and emotional trauma. "The consequences for society," Cook added, "include the costs associated with all of the above plus the erosion of our civil liberties."

The proposed measure, S 3438 Sub A, passed in the Senate by a 35-1 vote on April 15. The bill then went to the House Health, Education and Welfare Committee, where it is still under consideration. A slightly amended version will likely be presented within a few weeks for a vote before the full House. If it passes there, the measure will be sent back to the Senate to approve any amendments. Gov. DiPrete could then sign the bill into law.

On May 11, about 50 people attended a public hearing to testify on the legislation. According to Cook, over half of those who spoke at the hearing were firmly critical of many of the bill's provisions. Despite opposition from a broad range of people, including doctors, AIDS educators and social service providers, Cook and Fish expect that some version of the bill will be pushed

through the legislature and signed by the governor. They claim the House is under tremendous pressure from the governor and health director, though some of the sections that are blatantly "blame the victim-ish" may be amended. Still, they expressed fear that the mandatory testing provision of the bill would stay.

"I don't know of any other testing proposals in the country that are as sweeping as this one," Fish said. "The health department and the governor can say they're being national leaders; they can pretend to adopt this courageous posture. But all they're doing is promoting a bill that mirrors the fears and lack of information of the public."

"Extremism in the cause of public health only serves extremism, not public health," Fish added.

Mandatory and "routine" HIV testing

Bill S 3438 Sub A calls for two types of HIV testing — mandatory testing, which requires no consent of the individual; and a system of "routine" testing, in which individuals may refuse by signing a legal waiver. This "routine" procedure differs from other voluntary HIV testing programs because it puts the burden on an individual to opt out of testing.

"[The routine testing provision] is exactly opposite of how it should be," said Steve Brown, executive director of the Rhode Island chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), which is working to oppose the bill. Brown added that the "routine" testing program (which he calls "quasi-mandatory" testing) does not include arrangements for pre-test counseling, and it does allow the state to conduct HIV testing without consent in certain circumstances, such as with some children.

Fish, who also expressed consternation about the manipulative provisions of "routine" testing, said, "It effectively denies people an informed reason to say no."

Furthermore, Fish explained that the mandatory testing part of the proposed

Continued on page 11

Membership Meeting Update

The next meeting is **Tuesday, May 24, 6:30pm** at GCN. All board, staff and volunteers who attend will discuss the Book Supplement and suggestions for news and features coverage. Participants will also hear updates on new board and staff members and on the Advisory Committee on AIDS. Join us and bring a snack.

GCN welcomes all letters to the editor except personal attacks. Carbon copies of letters sent elsewhere are printed on a space-available basis. The opinions expressed here are those of the author and are not intended to represent the views of the GCN membership. Letters must be TYPED, DOUBLE-SPACED AND NO LONGER THAN THREE PAGES. Send to: Community Voices, GCN, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.

AIDS coverage: enough or too much

Dear *GCN*:

Enclosed is an editorial I printed in Provincetown's *NEXT* magazine, in response to your AIDS editorial.

Gary L. Chefetz
Publisher, *NEXT*
Provincetown, MA

Last week's *Gay Community News* featured a front-page leader for an inside editorial that was very self-critical of the news organization's coverage and attention to the AIDS crisis. As a publisher of both general and gay market publications, I know how difficult this subject is to handle. It angered me that *GCN* would have to respond to criticism this way, because no matter what a publication does to cover AIDS, people will be dissatisfied.

There are people, both gay and straight, that will not advertise in *Provincetown Magazine* simply because it acknowledges and covers the existence of AIDS and AIDS groups in Provincetown. These people believe that the mere mention of the acronym will scare tourists away. But then there are those who applaud these stories and urge us to do more.

The same holds true for *NEXT*. One would think that AIDS coverage would be most welcome in a publication targeted to the gay community, but often we hear that we write too much about AIDS. "Can't you just drop it for a few weeks?" they'll ask. And the very next day someone else will be on the phone wanting to know why we missed this or that AIDS event or controversy. We just can't seem to find a comfortable balance.

If the gay press is accused of not doing enough, it's because the conventional media is not doing enough, and we are expected to compensate. If the gay press is accused of doing too much, it's because the conventional media is not doing enough, and we are overcompensating. Either way, it's not the gay press that is at fault. Without the so-called "straight" media meeting its responsibility in covering the AIDS crisis, the burden will continue to rest on the shoulders of the gay press, and those shoulders are simply not broad enough.

More than good intentions

Dear *GCN*:

A thoughtful vision is needed for any paper to cover the AIDS epidemic and we applaud *GCN*'s pledge to provide better coverage of what is the most important and complex issue facing the lesbian and gay community today.

While we agree with the general thrust of *GCN*'s editorial, that coverage needs improvement, we feel that the history of *GCN*'s uneven coverage of the epidemic is more complex than the editorial indicates. There have been excellent articles about AIDS over the years. However, the staff as a whole has never made a commitment to AIDS coverage, much less defined a vision of *GCN*'s role in explaining the politics of medicine, or the dimensions of class, race, gender and sexuality as they appear in the AIDS crisis.

The kinds of mistakes that get through are similar to those in the straight press. Reading the paper, it seems clear that staff writers and editors do not have a good grasp of AIDS. Sloppy or incorrect use of language, as in your recent safe sex article, and missed opportunities to point out the basic political issues render *GCN*'s AIDS coverage less effective than the Boston *Globe's*.

It will take more than good intentions and drawing up a list of articles before the paper will be a source of information on the AIDS epidemic. Staff members must educate themselves much more extensively about the epidemic and a few writers must take on primary responsibility for providing consistent and balanced coverage before the paper can begin to develop a long-term plan for improving coverage.

GCN has many knowledgeable sources both inside and outside the community it can draw on, including people with AIDS, medical providers, researchers and activists. These people provide not only important information and quotes, but are also indispensable in developing a sense of the important issues of the day. These sources can provide not only a wealth of information for news stories, but plenty of material to develop analytical pieces also.

Finally, we hope the scope of coverage will be realistic given the size of the paper. While AIDS is certainly of urgent concern, it is important to cover a range of gay liberation issues.

Good luck,
Chris Guilfooy
Cindy Patton
Boston, MA

That's why they call it a struggle

Dear *GCN*:

You do great work. Week after week you put out a paper that strives to fill the silence otherwise surrounding us. Your collective project is no doubt a handful — and you come through, weekly.

Having just read your self-critical "*GCN* and AIDS" editorial, I had to write and congratulate you all on your deepening commitment and expanding actions. That your project was weak in this area previously is less important to me than your current re-evaluation and direct response. You're a courageous crew. Not only do you formulate a collective response to your (our) reality, but you publish it and spread it across the country for a thorough review. Not being able to do everything all the time or developing at a different rate than some would wish comes with the territory. That's why they call it a struggle.

It's clear to me that you are valuable allies doing great work. You have my thanks, appreciation and patience while you get even better.

Sincerely,
Jim Shattuck
San Francisco, CA

GCN's coverage compassionate as well as informative

Dear *GCN*:

As a long-time regular reader of *GCN* and an admirer of the coverage you provide, I want to share my reaction to your recent front-page editorial on improving your coverage of AIDS.

Frankly, I was somewhat stunned that you would criticize yourselves so strongly. It has appeared to me that your coverage has been outstanding, consistently touching on various aspects of the epidemic, far out ahead of other things I have read, compassionate as well as informative.

So I take it very seriously that you would virtually indict yourselves for having failed to do well enough. It's almost as if the staff of, say, *Nuclear Times* were to publish a prominently-featured editorial saying that their coverage of disarmament issues had been woefully lacking, or if a few years back, *WIN* had declared that their coverage of Vietnam was substandard and that they were recommitting themselves. In other words, I think that the tone of this was perhaps a bit harsh on yourselves, even as you devote yourselves to doing better.

As editor of *PEACEWORK* — the peace and justice monthly published by the New England Regional Office of the American Friends Service Committee — this definitely sent me a message: if *GCN* thinks *their* coverage, thorough as it has been, has been

Gay Community News is produced by a collective dedicated to providing coverage of events and news in the interest of gay and lesbian liberation. The collective consists of a paid staff of eleven, a general membership of volunteers, and a board of directors elected by the membership.

Opinions reflected in "editorials" represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

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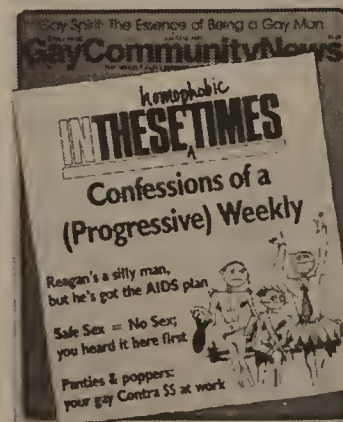
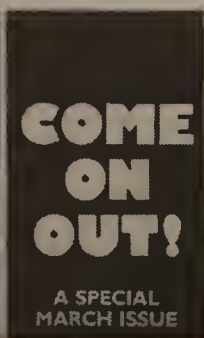
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Confronting lesbian battering

By the Task Force on Lesbian Battering of the Massachusetts Coalition of Battered Women Service Groups

Speaking out. That's exactly what battered and formerly battered lesbians are doing. It's not easy to break this silence; those who speak out about the abuse we have received at the hands of our lovers risk revictimization by a community which is not yet receptive to the truths we hold. Our experience is denied, often by our "lesbian feminist" friends, therapists, co-workers, etc. We are told that it isn't true, or we're exaggerating how bad it is. We are told that women aren't violent or abusive by nature, so if something did happen, we must have provoked it. If we stay with our battering lovers and try to make things work, we must consent to the abuse or somehow enjoy "playing the victim." If we defend ourselves and fight back in some way it's "mutual battering." By speaking out we are splitting the lesbian community. By speaking out we are feeding the arsenal of a homophobic world which will use this information in its fight to destroy us.

None of this is true, and the perpetuation of these myths gravely endangers the safety of us all. Battered women tend, if anything, to minimize rather than exaggerate their experiences. When a woman says that her lover is abusing her, we must take her seriously and be supportive. Battering is not limited to any one group within lesbian communities; radical feminists, butch and femme, "bar dykes," women of all races, classes, physical abilities, political views, spiritual beliefs, sexual practices, etc., have battered or been battered. Lesbian batterers have beaten, kicked, burned, assaulted with weapons, raped and held prisoner their women partners. They have humiliated, degraded and threatened them, isolated them from family and friends, controlled money, been overly jealous and possessive, and destroyed property. They have used homophobia to further control their partners, by both threatening and/or actually coming out for their lovers, assuring the woman that if she tries to leave, no one will be there to support her since she's queer, and asserting that, being a dyke, she deserves what she gets.

None of these abusive behaviors is in any way provoked by the battered woman; abuse is solely the responsibility of the abuser. While a woman may have a range of feelings in response to an event in her life or something her partner says or does, reacting to those feelings with violence is a behavioral choice. Alcohol and drugs do not cause abuse, and sobriety is no guarantee of non-abusiveness. A batterer is not out of control. In fact, she is very much in control of her actions, the intent and effect of which are to maintain control over her partner.

The fact that a battered woman stays does not mean she likes or consents to being abused. Lesbians stay with abusive partners for the same reasons that straight women stay — lack of choices, limited resources and/or support systems, love, hope, fear, etc. Holding a battered woman responsible because she stays, rather than holding a batterer accountable for being abusive, amounts to victim-blaming.

In addition, calling a woman's attempt to defend herself "mutual battering" minimizes the power dynamics of the relationship and tells a battered lesbian that she is equally responsible for what is happening. What distinguishes abuse from self-defense is who holds the power in the relationship. Violence on the part of the batterer is one piece of a whole pattern of behaviors in which the batterer seeks to control the thoughts, feelings and actions of her partner. Self-defense is an attempt to stop the abuse. Viewing self-defense as battering may also make it less likely that the battered woman will seek support, as it tells her that she is being abusive.

Placing the responsibility for abuse on some external substance, event or person in effect gives the batterer permission to continue battering. Community denial of how widespread a phenomenon battering is has the same effect. Acknowledging and confronting lesbian battering can be painful and frightening, but that is not an excuse for not doing it. Battered lesbians who are courageous enough to have raised the issue have often received a response which focuses on

how, if this information gets out, the lesbian community will be split at a time when we need each other most, or that it will be further ammunition for a homophobic straight world to use against us.

It is not the battered lesbian who splits the community by speaking out; shunning the messenger instead of addressing the message is a dangerous position to take. If there is any community split, it is caused by the batterer's abuse, not by the battered woman who seeks safety and accountability. And the potential reaction of homophobes is not a viable reason for not addressing a community issue. Homophobes will always find an excuse to be homophobic. Denying battered lesbians for the sake of a false acceptance by the straight world essentially aligns the community with batterers at the expense of their battered partners. It says that violence and abuse are acceptable forms of behavior in our communities. It disregards the danger and fear which are a constant presence for battered lesbians. It downplays the possibility that each one of us could be battered. It creates a new closet, one which demands that battered lesbians hide our experiences in order to avoid ostracism. But as we know, while closets afford a certain type of protection, they do not provide true safety. Requiring the silence of battered lesbians perpetuates the isolation, self-hate, guilt, etc., which battering fosters. It perpetuates battering as well — if we cannot talk about the abuse, we cannot get support; if we cannot get support, the batterer can continue being abusive without being held accountable by the community.

We cannot afford to continue this denial, for the sake of lesbians who are being abused as well as for the community as a whole. As we do the painful and difficult work of confronting ourselves and each other around battering, we can borrow strength and strategy from the battered women's movement. Everything the movement knows and teaches about battering has come from listening to battered women themselves as they share their experiences and set the priorities for the movement. Lesbian communities can respond to lesbian battering similarly. We can create safe space — literal and figurative — for battered lesbians to tell their stories and we can listen without judgment. We can ask battered lesbians what they need and help create ways to address those needs. We can confront the batterers we know and hold them accountable. We can create social norms to replace those which condone the abuse of power and control in relationships with norms that encourage us to treat each other and ourselves respectfully.

In addressing lesbian battering, we have the opportunity to be a role model, both for other minority communities who may feel similar pressures to keep internal issues hidden, and for the larger heterosexual community. Our determination to work through our issues rather than looking the other way can be a source of inspiration to others who wish to do the same. In acknowledging our weaknesses, we demonstrate our strengths. Our willingness to confront ourselves around battering demonstrates our commitment to creating a new social order, one in which violence and coercion of all kinds are unacceptable; one in which power is not defined as control or "power over," but "power to," "power with," "power for"; a social order which is truly based on egalitarianism and respect.

The Task Force on Lesbian Battering can be reached by calling The Mass. Coalition of Battered Women Service Groups at 426-8492.

"Speaking Out" is part of our continuing effort to provide a true forum of opinion for the community. We encourage you to send your ideas, feelings and comments to us, and to respond to ideas expressed in this space. The opinions expressed are those of the author and are not intended to represent the views of the GCN membership. Submissions must be TYPED, DOUBLE-SPACED, AND NO LONGER THAN FIVE PAGES. Send to: Speaking Out, GCN, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.

We held each other up against a world of oppression

Dear GCN:

This letter is in response to D. Vanderbilt's letter published in Vol. 15, No. 35. What he says is partly true.

There is another side that I'd like to share. For 6 years I had an old man here. My greatest enemy was not him or the others. It was the administration.

My old man and I truly had something good. A relationship that was one of caring and respect. He never sold me to anyone or made demands upon me. He is straight and I am gay. Yet the love and the bond we have is special. We were together 24 hours a day for 6 years and held each other up in a world of oppression. I love Tommy very much.

On December 17, 1987 the administration decided that it was time for Tommy and I to be separated. I was moved to a one man cell. We only see each other now at meal times. It is very difficult. Each day the pain of being separated seems greater and my anger increases towards those who have done this to us.

As I stated, there are 2 sides to the story. For those not so lucky as I, I wish you the very best in your search. Hopefully there are a few who've also found a special man like I have. I'd like to hear from people about this.

In love and unity we'll stand
Mel Rhodes
287630
Box 520
Walla Walla, WA 99362

Degrading to be utterly at the whim of others

Dear GCN:

It is a dehumanizing experience to be regarded as a number, not a person. Being incarcerated, it is degrading to be utterly at the whim of others 24 hours a day. Prisoners of color and definite national origin have some organizations that try to assist them. As do those whose rights have been violated in some way. But those of us whose persecution is increased simply because we are gay have practically no voice, on the outside, against our keepers. We have no one but caring individuals to help show that we are not totally alone.

Since Dec. 28 I have had an incident report in my central file. It was served to me simply because I am known to be gay. Such reports are a serious matter because they adversely affect parole hearings, furloughs, even housing. Others here have the same problem.

Will you help gays everywhere in the federal penal system by writing the warden (Warden Dubois, 3301 Leestown Rd, Lexington, KY 40511) and urging that my prejudiced incident report be expunged and that bias because of sexual orientation be eradicated?

Thank you,
Marta Helm
04086-045
3301 Leestown Rd
Lexington, KY 40511

Is this rehabilitation or just plain ol' fashion get back?

Dear GCN:

I was just sitting here in this prison cell contemplating the motivational force (reason) for my being surrounded by these particular circumstances (walls). Is this rehabilitation or punishment? It can't be both. As experience has taught me prison is a physical and psychological form of severe dependency. How can it be perceived as anything less? You are forced to live by others' dictates, confined to a very small space, dependent on the cage-keepers for your "three hots and a cot", until you are released with maybe \$50 and an ex-con's "wardrobe." Then what?

What's the real point of all this? Is it rehabilitation or just plain ol' fashion get back?

Sincerely,
Vernon Beal Jr.
Box 900 — 156561
Jefferson City, MO 65102

lacking, then we have to do far better. Perhaps that is partly what you are intending. We have carried a handful of articles in *PEACEWORK*, and we will be trying to do a better job over the months ahead, as a result of your editorial. Specifically, we will move in that direction with a piece in the June issue by Gordon Gottlieb covering the editorial and its implications for those who care about peace and social justice. Thanks for doing all you do.

Sincerely,
Pat Farren
Cambridge, MA

Effective AIDS information must be accessible

Dear GCN:

Congratulations on your commitment to providing more AIDS information to your readers. I think it's a terrific idea to provide safe sex and drug use guidelines in each issue.

However, I am concerned about the format in your AIDS information center-spread. Here at the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, we are becoming increasingly sensitized to the need for lower-literacy educational materials. Studies show that the majority of the United States population is best able to comprehend material written at a 7th or 8th grade level. Recently I attended a full-day workshop on this topic, where I became familiar with the Edward Fry graph for estimating readability — a widely-accepted scientific formula for determining the reading level of educational materials.

Using this formula, I evaluated the "Safer Sex and Drug Use Guidelines" printed in your 4/24 issue, and found that the piece's reading level averages 13th grade. Since I know you want that information accessible to *all* your readers, I would strongly suggest that you re-write the guidelines to bring them down to a 7th or 8th grade level. I am enclosing samples of several of our brochures (targeted to adults, but written at a 7th or 8th grade level). Basically, the key points to remember are:

1. Shorter, simpler words (one- or two-syllable words should be used in place of three-, four- or five-syllable words whenever possible).
2. Shorter, simpler sentences. Rather than using endless commas and semi-colons, which create a much more complex sentence structure, stick to one point per sentence — or better yet, use bullet points to highlight each item.

I'll also enclose for your staff some copies of the graph I used, so that you can do a reading-level check yourself on future pieces.

As AIDS educators, we constantly face new challenges in order to make AIDS information available and effective for all. Our task is complicated by the fact that much of the information we have contains layers of subtlety and interpretation. These "gray areas" are real issues, yet the ultimate purpose of our education must be to help people make necessary behavior changes. To this end, phrases like "Be aware that some risk of infection may be associated with rimming (anal-oral contact)" are counter-productive and confusing. I'd propose that an alternative read something like, "Rimming (licking assholes) is risky. Even if it does not spread AIDS, it can spread other illnesses."

One final comment: I'd also encourage consistency of language throughout the guidelines. Why call female genitals "vaginas" in one place and "cunts" in another? If you're going to use slang terms like "cunts" and "asshole," why not also use "piss," "shit," "cock," etc.? Or use "vagina" throughout and put "cunt" in parentheses the first time you use it — but don't keep switching back and forth.

Once again, let me commend you for taking this on. GCN is in a unique and important position to do AIDS education, as one of very few national gay publications, and as the *only* gay publication with substantial outreach to prisoners. I greatly admire your commitment, and look forward to seeing more readable safe sex/drug use guidelines in future issues.

Sincerely,
Ruth Schwartz
Educational Events Coordinator
San Francisco AIDS Foundation
San Francisco, CA

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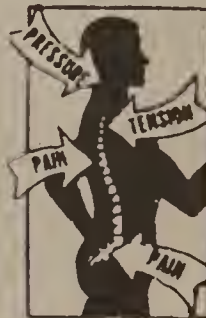
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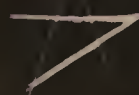
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A torch still burning

Triangle's excellent production of Fierstein's Trilogy

Torch Song Trilogy. By Harvey Fierstein.
Directed by Steven O'Donnell. With Michael
Goodson, Christopher Tarjan, Barbara Dooneief
Haas. At Triangle Theater Company's Paramount
Penthouse Theater, Boston, Mass. Th-Sat, through
June 4.

Reviewed by Christopher Wittke

Harvey Fierstein's *Torch Song Trilogy* is just that, a collection of three full-length one act plays. You say you don't get enough entertainment out of your disposable (?) income? Then you should make reservations to spend four and a half hours with drag queen Arnold Beckoff and his assorted friends and lovers in the current production at Boston's Triangle Theater. That's right, what you get here is four and a half (actually, closer to five with the intermissions) hours of laughter and tears — all brought on by Fierstein's witty, groundbreaking, Tony-winning plays and Triangle's worthy production of them.

Local favorite Michael Goodson plays the drag queen Arnold (current stage name:

Virginia Hamm;
formerly known as
Kitty Litter and
Bertha Venation)

theatre

and he wins us over immediately with the opening monologue of the first play *The International Stud*. As Arnold gussies himself up for his evening's performance, he tells us about his life and lusts, his philosophy and his heartbreaks. Goodson exudes charm every step of the way, and combined with Fierstein's little-slice-of-life dialogue, the result is magic. Perhaps Arnold's most revealing statement comes at the end of the monologue when he says "In my life I have slept with more men than are named and/or numbered in the Bible (Old and New Testaments put together). But in all those beds not once has someone said, 'Arnold, I love you...' that I could believe. So, I ask myself, 'Do you really care?' And the only answer I can give myself is, 'Yes, I care.'"

The International Stud details the burgeoning relationship of Arnold and Ed Reiss. Played by Christopher Tarjan — who bears a facial resemblance to Ronald Reagan — Ed is a bisexual teacher Arnold meets in the front room of a backroom bar. For all of his worldliness, Arnold has never set foot in the sexual arena of the club. But when Ed dumps Arnold for a woman (just in time for an extended visit with his parents), Arnold decides to give the backroom the old once over. Goodson's pantomiming of public sodomy is hilarious with the neurotic fuckee chattering incessantly ("You know, I really like you. Maybe that's a stupid thing to say at a time like this."). What with the eradication of the backrooms, *Stud* (written in 1978), can now serve as cultural history with a very

human heart.

Fugue in a Nursery is the second, and structurally the most complex of the trilogy. Ed is now living with Laurel and Arnold is now living with Allan, a model and would-be disco owner played with a winsome charm by Diego Arciniegas. In a desperate display of civility, Laurel invites the two gay men to stay with her and Ed for a weekend of getting to know each other. The play is mostly set on a giant bed where the four interact in scenes which flash forward and back, dialogue overlapping and conversation revealing deeper aspects of each character. Denise Cormier plays Laurel, a rather unsympathetically written character, dealing with contradictory feelings upon seeing Ed with his ex-boyfriend Arnold. When Ed reminds her that the entire civil weekend was her idea, she says "Just because I said that's what I want doesn't mean I'm ready for it." By the end of the play, as Fierstein allows for a more human character to emerge, Cormier had won me over and made me like Laurel.

The third play, *Widows and Children First!*, is most linear in its narrative structure. Taking place five years after *Fugue*, the play opens with panicked preparations for a visit by Arnold's mother. What will she think of Ed, who is "crashing on Arnold's sofa" during a separation from Laurel? What will she do when she finds out that David, played by Jeff Cohen with a too-quiet speaking voice, isn't really Arnold's roommate but his 15-year-old foster son(!)? And what would we audience members do without another Jewish Mother role rife with stereotypes? Maybe enjoy *Widows* a little more. Despite the fact that Barbara Dooneief Haas plays Mrs. Beckoff at the top of her lungs almost from word one — making what serves as a resolution of sorts less believable — this play deals well with issues of self-acceptance, the construction and destruction of various types of family ties, homophobia, fag-bashing...you name it! And Goodson delivers his single most powerfully rendered dramatic scene as Arnold finally confronts his mother's prejudice. It is a bravura piece of acting and a wonderful capper on a job well done.

Triangle Theater is to be commended for finally bringing the complete trilogy to Boston, and Steven O'Donnell's direction makes the most out of the tiny theater's facilities. In fact, the set for Arnold's apartment in the third play (designed by Don Meuse) is a testament to the magic of theater. As fulfilling as the plays and most of the performances may be, however, a 12:30 a.m. curtain call is just *too late* for an evening of theater that begins at 7:30 p.m. But I'll be darned if I can figure out how it could be made any shorter, and there's something to be said for that. □

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Pride

Continued from page 3

cluding the grassroots organizations MASS ACT OUT, the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) and the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee (GLDC). Thus far, no people with AIDS or ARC have been lined up to speak, though Hayes said Boston's AIDS Action Committee (AAC) has indicated interest in a speaking slot.

ACT UP's Steven Rose said a person with AIDS from ACT UP would probably speak at Pride, but they hadn't yet chosen the individual. "We're real concerned about the lack of representation of PWAs at Pride," Rose said. "It's absolutely vital to have people speaking who aren't passive, docile and accepting. ACT UP's job is to get treatment to people — whatever happens at Pride will have a real political significance on what's going on with AIDS in Boston."

According to Clos and Hayes, the city of Boston has been very cooperative throughout the planning of Pride. One issue, however, remains unresolved. Last year, organizers flew a Pride flag with a lesbian/gay rhinoceros symbol at City Hall plaza as participants assembled for the parade. But Boston officials are refusing to allow the flag to be flown this year, citing a new ordinance that prohibits the display of non-city flags. Arguing that other banners — such as Celtics and Red Sox flags — have been raised at City Hall, Pride organizers are attempted to change city officials' minds. "We're making ourselves a nuisance," Hayes said. "If the rhino flag doesn't get flown and I see another Celtics



Boston Pride '86

flag, we'll cause trouble."

Pride Day kicks off from City Hall at 12:00 noon, led by a pack of women on bikes, the Moving Violations motorcycle club. The parade proceeds through town to the afternoon rally site at the Boston Common. Groups may still register to march in the parade, or rent tables for distributing information or selling food or products. In addition, volunteers are still needed for all aspects of Pride Day and Pridefest '88. For more information or to volunteer, call 232-1716 or 267-2113. □



Aly Kim and Cristy Chung talk about their new Pacific/Asian lesbian anthology and about building an Asian lesbian community/movement



Art by Q

June '87

Between The Lines is a collection of writings by Pacific/Asian lesbians of Santa Cruz, Calif. The book represents, in the editors' words, "a seed, a beginning" to further exploration of Asian lesbians' lives and heritage. Published last year by Dancing Bird Press, also of Santa Cruz, and edited by Aly Kim, Cristy Chung and A. Kaweah Lemeschewsky, *Between The Lines* offers poetry, erotic prose, letters, photography, a bibliography and discussion of topics ranging from mixed heritage to South Asian lesbianism to coming out to family and the search for community.

The following interview with Aly Kim and Cristy Chung was conducted late last year in Boston by S.H., a gay man active in AMALGM (Alliance of Massachusetts Asian Lesbians and Gay Men). The editors were travelling through Northeastern U.S. cities after the March on Washington, promoting their book and meeting with lesbian and gay Asians. Jack Lo, co-chair of AMALGM, also participated in the interview.

Note: *Between The Lines* is distributed by Herbooks of Santa Cruz, CA and is available for \$4.95.

By S.H.

S.H.: Let's talk about your book. When did it all start? How did the idea come about?

Aly: It goes back for me for maybe four years. I had been thinking for a long time that it would be good to get an anthology — because nothing existed. I had been doing research and was seeing stuff on Chicano lesbians, Black lesbians, Jewish lesbians and then Asian women. Nothing on Asian lesbians.

Then a friend of mine introduced me to [a woman named] Willie [Wilkinson] — my friend grabbed my hand and said, "There's another one!" Because in Santa Cruz there were very few Asian lesbians. So I met Willie, and she was really committed to Asian lesbian identity. We got together and decided we were going to put together a national or international anthology. Then we all ended up in a class together [at the Univ. of Calif.-Santa Cruz].

Cristy: It was an Asian woman's class on campus. That's when the three of us — Aly, Willie and I — started spending more time together and talking about issues.

Aly: In this class on issues that affect Asian American women we brought up lesbian issues — we always brought the topic up. So the three of us started talking about doing a book together. Willie and I were doing an independent study with one professor saying that we were working on a book. We wrote up a prospectus on what we wanted out of it. And I started working on a bibliography. But it wasn't happening at all. So in 1987 Cristy and I said: "We just want to do it. We don't want to keep on putting it out there in the future — worrying whether we can do an international scope or whether we can do a national scope." We just wanted to get something together now because we're so invisible.

S.H.: How did you get the contributors, the writers?

Aly: Just from people we knew or heard about. There aren't many Asian lesbians in Santa Cruz. Our friends would always be on the lookout for other Asian lesbians. Our friend Laine did a massage benefit for us.

We got a flier that said it was for an anthology that was coming out. And then I put a little thing in the school affirmative action/equal opportunity paper saying that we wanted submissions. It was not until April of 1987 that things got rolling.

Cristy: And even before we got all the contributors, Aly and I wanted to get people meeting together to get a group going. That's when Kaweah started getting involved; she's the third editor of the book. So we were meeting weekly just to talk and share our writing and to critique — to help each other say what we wanted to say. That's when it started to turn into a serious effort, when it started looking like we actually had the writing, we actually had the energy and we actually had the people to do it. It was actually going to happen. That's when we started working on the funding.

Aly: A lot of women were not really excited or enthused. They felt like it was necessary, but everyone was saying, "I don't have the time. I can't really write, I haven't done this. I haven't done this for a long time. I have this paper to write." So we kept extending the deadline. We kept saying, "Just give us something in two weeks." Or "We'll help you write it." "Just call us anytime, we'll help you do it." Finally, a lot of things came together — just fell in place.

S.H.: These were all original works. You did not go looking for things that had already been published.

Aly: Some of the pieces are reprints because by the time the book came up some of the pieces had been printed in a women's paper.

S.H.: How did you decide what got printed?

Cristy: Most everything got printed. Except for one or two things that we knew had been repeated somewhere else that people could get already. And only in terms of space did we cut one or two poems.

S.H.: So these were local people and original works. Another approach I was thinking might have been to contact lesbians and lesbian groups in other localities and find stuff that had been published before, but you decided not to take that route?

Aly: Because of time restrictions. We wanted to get something together and we were really working under pressure as far as getting money. A lot of the money we got was from the university and we had to use it within a certain time period. But one of my next ideas and ventures is that we would publish a book of reprints of articles and pieces that have been written in other places. Because I think a lot of us don't know that anything exists. In 1983 I thought there were things that existed — an article by Willie [Wilkinson] and a book by (poet and fiction writer) Kitty [Tsui]...and that's it. We now have collected 300, 400 articles and books, letters, everything we know exists. I'm sure nobody else knows about it all unless they spend the time to dig for it.

S.H.: What about the funding? Was that difficult to obtain?

Cristy: The bulk of it came from the university. The rest we solicited. When we finally put our minds to it, when we finally started talking about and seeing it happen, it kinda just carried itself. We turned in our grant proposal — the first one — the day it was due and it had been written the night before. And we got all the money we asked for.

Cristy: And the rest of the money just came in. Like my mom contributed \$100 because she was so supportive of it and other people like Herbooks — the two women who are our distributors — they gave us money because they wanted to see it happen. And that's just what everyone kept telling us. "This is so fantastic. We just want to see it happen. So here's the money."

S.H.: So altogether how much did it cost?

Aly: It was about \$1800 — between \$1800 and \$1900.

S.H.: Who was your printer?

Aly: We got printed on campus. They were competitive because they were the community press. We printed a thousand copies.

S.H.: And you are doing the distribution yourself?

Aly: We are doing the local distribution. Herbooks is handling the national, which means putting it in catalogues for the East Coast and the West Coast.

S.H.: What have you done in the way of publicity and promotion?

Aly: We haven't done a lot of advertising but we have been reviewed in the *New Phoenix Rising* [an Asian/Pacific Lesbian Newsletter that comes out of the San Francisco Bay Area], and *ALOEC* [Asian Lesbians of the East Coast] is doing a review for *Conditions* magazine.

S.H.: Another group to hit are the straight Asian American publications. A lot of them are published from California. It would be good for them to deal with it — the book and Asian lesbianism.

Aly: We met with the head librarian at the

Asian American library at U.C. Berkeley. She was very encouraging and also stimulating because she said: "Don't keep it within your own community. The whole Asian community needs to deal with this and not pretend that it does not exist. Or that it has never existed in the home countries because it has forever — it's just been silenced." In Los Angeles a woman has taken it to the Asian bookstores.

Community and Organizing

S.H.: Let's talk about the Asian lesbian community in Santa Cruz. What is it like?
Aly: Well, half of us are here [in this room]. Santa Cruz is an hour and a half south of San Francisco. There is a big gay and lesbian community in Santa Cruz — it's a university town so there's lots of students.

Cristy: There's a big women's community, but a very small local Asian community, even by West Coast standards. Among the students there's quite a big population and they're pretty active. And it's even broken down into smaller groups — Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese.

S.H.: Are you connected with any of the Asian groups on campus?

Cristy: Not really, but the Asian groups just put out a book and they really wanted Asian lesbian contributors.

Aly: Most of the Asian organizations on campus are very social. That's why lots of people have problems with them. Not doing political work, discussion, things like that. I'm not very active in any organization.

S.H.: How do you define then the community you hang out with? Just a small group of friends or is there something more rooted in a larger lesbian community or student community?

Cristy: We started our own. A lot of our energy really went into that group [that worked on the anthology] and the three of us were really there for each other — we were our community and our survival.

Aly: By the end of the 1987 school year we had heard about more Asian lesbians. And right after the book came out a woman who had met me before called me up and said, "It's so good to see this book" because now she felt she could have a community to draw on. So we've been hearing names around and we're just trying to get a hold of them, almost pull them out — because it's so foreign in a way since nothing like an Asian lesbian group has existed. Like, "What's this going to be, who's this going to be?"

Cristy: People are so isolated, almost to the point where you don't consciously think of isolation as an issue even though it is and you're constantly dealing with it on a daily level. You don't think in terms of needing a group of Asian lesbians just to be around.

Aly: Part of the reason the three of us began meeting every week was to let other people know we're going to be there — so that we have this continuing presence. If someone is ready and they want to come join us, they'll know where we'll be and know how to find us. All these women we know really need a community, but no one has the energy to really keep it going.

S.H.: Has either of you had experiences with a large Asian lesbian community?

Aly: I have. In San Francisco. I never lived up there. I was commuting from Santa Cruz every weekend. This was about four years ago when *Phoenix Rising* was starting. It was then called *Asian Women*. They tried to be an organization rather than what they are now, which is just a newsletter. They would try to bring women together. This was a lesbian group but they called themselves *Asian Women* because they didn't want to alienate Asian women who could not say lesbian or who felt uncomfortable with that word. When I was involved with them, they were just trying to pull together and they were having a hard time focusing. There was a lot of dissension in the group because some people wanted more politics, others more social, some more discussion. ...

But when I was first starting they were just getting the newsletter going. And I was so glad to be in a room with six other, ten other Asian lesbians who were talking about politics, talking about putting together a newsletter, talking about putting together a dance. It was the first Asian lesbian dance I had gone to and I walked into this bar and there were all these Asian faces. And all I could do... I go "gasp." I went there with some non-Asian friends and I literally stood there with my mouth open for 15 minutes. I love to dance and they said "Come on and dance," but I said "I can't." I just stood there looking at everybody and then I just started screaming right on the dance floor because it was just so exciting. I had never been in that kind of atmosphere.

S.H.: You were also active in the student gay groups. What was that like?

Cristy: Very frustrating. When I started

coming out I was more involved with the women's community and trying to get stuff out there and make them aware of women of color issues. And being the only Asian woman and being all the time the only woman of color in the whole group, it was really frustrating. I got so much shit from them and always had to do double work. And I never had anyone listen to my issues. Like for International Women's Week they never did anything international. It was all local and it was all white. And they never dealt with any lesbian issues.

So I moved into the gay and lesbian community, where it had, before I entered, been very male and of course very white. But after I started getting really involved there were more women starting to come in. It was so frustrating working with men who didn't want to work with women. We were working with a very white community that wouldn't listen to my issues and I kept pushing them: "You have to deal with racism, we have to get events that are people of color events." There was also a lot of infighting. I said, "Forget it. I don't have the energy for this." That's when Aly and I began to really work together, and I knew that was where my energy belonged. Where stuff is really going to happen. We did an event for Gay Awareness Week where we got Kitty [Tsui] to do a reading. I had wanted her to come down for a year to do something. And it just never worked. There was never the money and people never gave me enough support to have it happen.

Jack: How do you feel about working with Asian gay men? Do you have any difficulties working with Asian men? Have you worked with Asian gay men in San Francisco or Santa Cruz?

Aly: I haven't. In Santa Cruz, forget it. There's just one or two. In San Francisco I was commuting and just getting involved with the Asian women's group. Also, like in Boston, there are very few women involved in the group [a San Francisco organization for Asian lesbians and gay men which also includes non-Asian gay people]. Also the group in San Francisco is a very social group with a lot of white men. The women didn't want anything to do with that. The politics they wanted to talk about and work on were very different. Their attitude about procedure was different.

Cristy: I had more [contact with gay Asian men] in L.A. I went to the conference in L.A. [The First Asian/Pacific Lesbian and Gay Conference, July 18, see *GCN*, Vol. 15, No. 12] It was really excellent. It was sad in that I don't think the turnout was as big as it might have been. But I thought it was an incredible experience because I had never worked with men. We were really wanting to talk about what our issues were, really wanting to work together. It was still difficult because in the workshops women would speak up less or men would still dominate the conversations — there were still some issues that were different and they didn't necessarily get brought up and people still had a hard time dealing with conflict. But for me it was great because I really got to spend some time talking to men and I think over all people really walked away feeling like we had some grounds for working together.

Aly: For me to have met with you [referring to Jack Lo] in D.C. was exciting. Because I hadn't gotten to meet with gay men — Asian men before. And having heard of the San Francisco group I had felt that I didn't even want to deal [with Asian gay men]. But to hear you talk, and sounding so sincere and really putting yourself out there was so exciting. Just to meet you and talk. Like today, talking about putting the book out and so on, it's just like I don't have to explain to you — it's not like working with white lesbians for example, where I always have to explain. You just get tired. You don't want to have to do that.

S.H.: You had mentioned a lesbian retreat that drew 80 people.

Aly: This was the Asian/Pacific Lesbian Retreat in California last May. First of its kind on the West Coast.

Cristy: A couple of lesbians actually developed the idea. There was a whole core group who then organized it.

S.H.: Both of you were there. What sort of issues were discussed?

Aly: Mixed heritage. Political organizing. Creativity — there's dance, art.

S.H.: Are there any plans to follow that up?

Aly: Everybody wants it and says it will be at least three times as big as the first one, but it took so much work and energy for the core group to pull together the first one, [it's hard] to think about doing other things. It's kind of sad.

S.H.: We always think there are lots and lots of Asian gay people out on the West Coast. What is your impression? Are there lots of people who don't go to organizations and you see them in bars and that's it?

Aly: Oh yeah. Even at the retreat, 80 is such a tiny number of Asian lesbians. There's a bar in San Francisco where there is a majority of Filipina women. And that is considered the Filipina bar and it's packed. If any, a few were at the retreat. That is like a whole other community. There is a Japanese lesbian group in San Francisco who put out a newsletter in Japanese. First generation. A couple of the women were at the retreat. I know there is a whole other network that does not belong to any sort of group. Especially now that the paper — *Phoenix Rising* — is just a newspaper, not a group. Different groups are now springing up due to the retreat. There was a big workshop on mixed heritage and they're dealing with issues of being mixed heritage. And several women started meeting after that and wanted to put together a video.

Traveling through the Northeast

S.H.: Why don't you tell us a little bit of your travels through the East Coast to promote the book? Some of your observations.

Aly: In Chicago and here [in Boston] we feel like the Asian lesbians are not in touch with one another. People are splintered and everyone's feeling like they're the only one. [Our friend] Lola [in Chicago] has been trying for about five years to get a group together there. They got one issue of a newsletter out and everybody's kind of dissolved. They're getting another group together now.

Cristy: In D.C. for the March in October there was a whole house full [of Asian lesbians] but most of us were from the West Coast.

Aly: We met about four different women who lived locally and others who lived on the outskirts of D.C. We've been collecting names and addresses. And then we'll say — we'll give you the list of your local group so that you can get in touch with one another.

S.H.: That's great. So you are helping to get local people together.

Aly: We're trying. A lot of time we've spent trying to call people. In New York we spent time with all the *ALOE*C (Asian Lesbians of the East Coast) members.

Cristy: But they are really split apart. There are three of them who are still trying to keep the group going. They have meetings every first Tuesday of the month at the community center — they're open meetings — so a core is still trying to continue. They still publish their newsletter but it's always been sporadic.

S.H.: In Boston there have been attempts to form a separate Asian lesbian group, but I don't think they have been successful. We used to have more lesbians in the group.

Cristy: I think that on the West Coast since the retreat there's been a focus on Asian lesbians, Asian gay men as primary in our lives. And that's where a lot of our energy is coming from. The retreat was good because we were focusing in on ourselves. We weren't focusing on any opposing outside force. It was us, we together, our issues. The effect is that the rest of the community sees us as a visible, viable force.

Aly: You gotta tell the story.

Cristy: We were in D.C. at the March. We went to the Women of Color Dance after the Asian gay and lesbian party out at this women's bar. And there was this big band of us — 14 people in the group.

Aly: How many people, when they go out, see a group of 14 Asian lesbians? So we just take over this bar because it's pretty small. And we're all dancing and we have all this energy and we're just being out there. And then we're ready to go, we're all together, right, so we all leave the bar together. Well we didn't think anything of it because we were all so excited and partying. When we got here [to Boston] a friend of ours who wasn't at the March told us she had been hearing about these Asian lesbians in D.C. from everyone. And the great energy and just that there was this huge group that came into the bar and when they left the party was over. For us to hear that we made a presence and that people saw us... That we made an impact.... □

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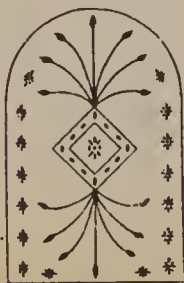
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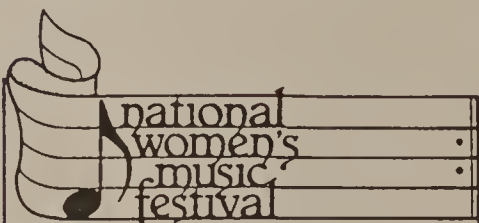
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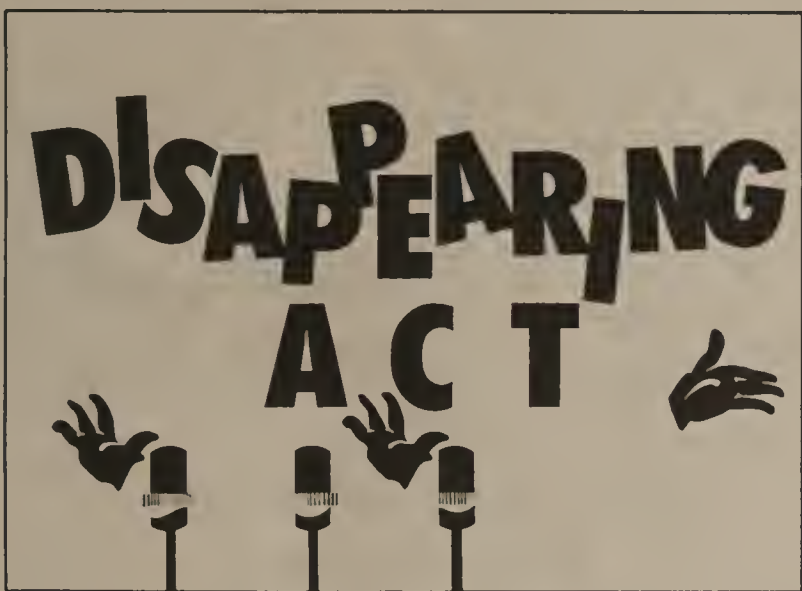
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FINAL PERFORMANCES.
MUST CLOSE MAY 29!



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"Disappearing Act," a non-stop, fast-paced musical revue, takes a disarming, witty and critical look at the world of the urban gay male. With a delightfully diverse musical score, "Disappearing Act" covers a broad variety of topics.

Words and music by Mike Oster.

Extended thru May 29. Thurs. thru Sun.

Performance time is 7:30 p.m. Two performances on Sun.,
Brunch at 1:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

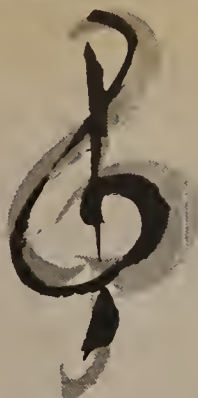
On May 29, following the last show, there will be an auction to benefit AAC. Please join the casts of "Disappearing Act," "Forbidden Broadway," "Les Miserables" and "Nunsense" for an auction of various items from their shows.

For tickets call 536-0972.

Tickets also available at BOSTIX and TICKETRON.

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Vice, horror and ecstasy

von Praunheim's meditation on Anita Berber

Anita, Dances of Vice Directed by Rosa von Praunheim. Written by Rosa von Praunheim and Hanneline Limpach. With Lotti Hubler, Ina Blum, Mikael Honesseu. At the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston. May 18 — 24.

Reviewed by Michael Bronski

Gay filmmaker Rosa von Praunheim became famous in 1970 with his documentary *It Is Not The Homosexual Who Is Perverse, But The Situation In Which He Lives*. The film mixed gay liberation politics with a heavy dose of Marxism and a stringent critique of popular culture. His newest work — *Anita, Dances of Vice* — shows a certain mellowing, as well as a vast improvement over his earlier film technique. For while the complexities of culture, politics and personal lives are still at the center of von Praunheim's thought, he is more forgiving, more open to the possibilities of pleasure, and more indulgent of his characters' humanity.

The framework of *Anita* is the confinement in an asylum of an old, slightly crazy Berlin street person (Lotti Hubler) who imagines herself to be the infamous 1920s nude dancer Anita Berber. Berber was the final word on Weimar decadence, a dancer whose style and life made Josephine Baker look convent-school bred. But the bulk of the film — and the real texture and shape of it — is in the long flashbacks in which Hubler sees herself as the flamboyant Berber. As played by Ina Blum (who also plays Hubler's nurse — all of the fantasies are populated by the inmates and the staff of the hospital), Anita Berber is a mixture of Liza Minnelli, Cher, several drag queens,

and Annie Lennox. She flings her limbs about, wears feathered hairdresses (and nothing else), rolls her eyes, has lesbian sex, and sniffs cocaine with a vengeance. The film is dreamlike, drifting back and forth between the imagined technicolor past and the all too black and white present. Much of von Praunheim's technique — all of it quite effective — is evocative of early Fritz Lang and George Pabst films, especially the decadent *Dr. Mabuse* series and the lesbian *Pandora's Box*.

But the power of *Anita, Dances of Vice* is the film's meditation of the importance of personal freedom and artistic expression in the face of social repression. Although von Praunheim is critical of parts of Berber's lifestyle (she herself seems to have no politics and her drug use is definitely portrayed as harmful abuse), he is clear-headed in his appraisal of the conflict between the open expression of sexuality and repressive middle-class morality. Anita and her homosexual partner/lover/betrayer Droste (Mikael Honesseu) exclaim that they do dances of Vice, Horror, and Ecstasy and given that we know that the Third Reich is at hand (as well as the eventual contemporary reality of the Berlin street person) the dances are not only liberating, but prophetic as well. *Anita, Dances of Vice* is sometimes a bit repetitive — von Praunheim seems to love some of his images so much he keeps repeating them — but it is ultimately quite moving. It is an unsentimental *Cabaret*, a *Threepenny Opera* which views sexuality as a force as vibrant as money, and a hymn to both the baseness and exaltation of the human spirit. □

Rhode Island

Continued from page 3

legislation allows prisons to forcibly isolate inmates who test positive for HIV, and to impose periodic testing whenever they deem it necessary.

According to Cook, Scott's rationale for advocating HIV testing as a means for stopping the spread of AIDS is unfounded and dangerous. In proposing the bill, Scott claimed testing would gather better epidemiological data, identify people who are HIV-positive so they would stop transmitting the virus and identify people who needed treatment. Cook disputed Scott's claims, arguing for example that people's sexual and drug use behavior has not been shown to hinge on knowledge of one's serological status. Instead, Cook explained, well-designed, targeted educational programs for those at high risk have been the most effective in curbing unsafe practices.

Fish added that there are far more accurate and humane ways to gather epidemiological data than through forced testing of a select group of already oppressed people.

In a letter distributed by Cook expressing her anger over the proposed legislation, Cook wrote, "Prostitutes, prisoners and IV drug users are already restricted in their liberties by society. They are easy targets for testing. They tend not to organize or vote. They also tend to be poor and ethnic minorities. Effective AIDS education — programs tailored to their needs — has not been tried, yet they are targeted for the testing and the inevitable discrimination which known HIV carriers experience."

Legalizing discrimination in housing and insurance

The bill includes an alleged anti-discrimination clause prohibiting bias against people who are HIV-positive or perceived to be HIV-positive. However, that provision allows two glaring exceptions. In the area of housing, discrimination on the basis of HIV antibody status is permitted in owner-occupied residences of four or fewer units.

"The bill would have the practical effect of legitimizing prejudice," Fish said. "Virtually all the affordable housing units — the potential living quarters for people with AIDS — could be unavailable. That is totally unacceptable."

Fish also decried the provision of the bill that allows insurance companies to demand HIV testing as long as applicants receive written notification of the requirement. Agreed Brown, "The bill does not ade-

quately include any assurance of confidentiality in test results, anti-discrimination protections or provision for support services."

Veneita Porter, a member of the Governor's Advisory Council on AIDS and former director of Rhode Island Project/AIDS, called the bill unsound public policy motivated by political opportunism. "Everything around here is done by personality," she said. "Those of us on the council who were pro-human rights were constantly berated and harassed. When we objected to the bill we were told we were 'standing in the way of progress.'"

"Any epidemiological data gathered from forced testing will be skewed at best. And the policy will especially harm women and minorities. It's really reprehensible."

□ filed from Boston

Stonewall

Continued from back page

ing the presidential AIDS commission. ACT UP has not let up for a moment. They've gone after these people with total persistence and that's exactly what we need. The politicians have been impressed by the anger. When ACT UP goes out in the streets, the police are afraid of them. The police move back, not for fear of AIDS but because of the militancy and the anger.

Rex: Where do you spend your activist energy these days?

John: Well, I live in California, so I'm working on the AIDS Initiative committee. We're trying to get an initiative on the ballot to raise \$180 million for AIDS research and we have to collect 600,000 signatures. I fight against LaRouche, of course. We also have to stay on top of [U.S. Rep. William] Dan-nemeyer. In addition, I'm trying to organize a national action in Washington, D.C. on Inauguration Day, so we have a presence there to raise the issues of AIDS and gay and lesbian rights to the incoming president. We don't let him have a year of grace — we can't afford it, our lives are on the line — we let our issues be known then, while there's international TV coverage.

One of the most important things we can be doing now is building coalitions with non-gay people — Blacks, Latinos, the labor movement. These are our natural allies. Ronald Reagan has been devastating to all these people.

Rex: I've heard something about a Stonewall 25th anniversary.

John: Yes, we're going to issue a call that people go to New York to celebrate in June of 1994. □

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Alexander Berkman, *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist*.



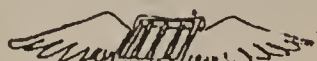
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Once again, the ACLU has FREE copies of the Rights of Prisoners available for prisoners. Write to: ACLU, 132 W.43rd, New York, NY 10036.



Drawing by Cliff Payne

I'm a free-lance artist. I like music (jazz, rock, classical) and have many hobbies, including ceramics, collecting stamps and billiards. I'm interested in hearing from anyone willing to write for friendship, especially fellow artists and lovers of art. Clifford PAYNE, D-17728, CMC-East, PO Box 8101 (A/S 208), San Luis Obispo, CA 93409.



PRISONER WRITERS!!

Send for your FREE Pen Prison Writing Bulletin to find out: publications that want to receive writing from prisoners (poetry, fiction, non-fiction or drama), writing contests for prisoners, tips on how to get your writing into print! FREE! Write now to: PEN American Center, 568 Broadway, New York, NY 10012

AIDS

AIDS Quilt — Prisoners!

If you want information on how to sew or draw/paint a piece of quilt for a prisoner friend of yours, or for all the 'nameless' prisoners at your joint who have died of AIDS and should be remembered in the Names Project quilt now touring the country, write GCN for the guidelines about how to make a 'section' for the quilt (3 ft X 6 ft) to be added to the growing giant quilt. Panels need to be finished by August. Help make prisoners more visible in the gay community's memory.

PWAs, PWARCs, and HIV positive PRISONERS who want penpals, please let us know at GCN if our current way of doing penpal ads in the paper is OK for you, or do we need to find a less 'public' way to put you in touch with penpals.

AIDS counseling hotline — FREE!
Call 1-800-221-7044 for toll-free counseling from a gay organization (Fund for Human Dignity). Spread this number around on bathroom, shower etc. walls in your joint. Maybe some other prisoners will call and learn something. It's a FREE call!



TS Newsletter

The monthly TS Newsletter welcomes letters, articles and other contributions. Write: TS Foundation, C.S., Box A-0084, Oklahoma City, OK 73162.

DOUBLE IMAGE is a non-profit support group for Transvestites, transsexuals, and crossdressers. Write them at: Double Image, Box 71795, Las Vegas, NV 89170. (702) 795-8798.



I'm a lesbian woman looking for a penpal. I need someone to communicate with, someone openminded. I like to dance, play softball, and share my thoughts. Please write Juanita WALKER, 6622, Box 180, Muncy PA 17756



I will like to have someone to write to. I got your name and address from Rock Thatcher of NAMBLA. Larry SWEATMAN, EF-190168, Star Route, Reidsville GA 30499.

30 yr old bisexual Latino seeking correspondence. Race, age and sex not important. Will answer all letters. I wouldn't mind a few letters from native New Yorkers. Bruce ADAMS, 11693-198, 808 Union St, San Diego CA 92101.

I need a good caring friend to correspond with and make life more meaningful. James MEDUZIA, 104094, Angola LA 70712.

Ex-Navy 'Daddy's boy', clean cut, intelligent, well-traveled would like to correspond with other gay men. In or out. Lots to talk about and explore. You name it. Shannon NEW, 438560, Rt 2 Box 20, Midway TX 75852.

Sexy, sweet, small transvestite in search of sincere, honest man to fill my hours of loneliness. I'm very affectionate and compassionate. They call me Joni. Write John SOLAY, 93883, CBD U/L 14, Angola LA 70712.

I will be release in Nov or Dec of 88. I need some help with finding a job. I could get out on parole now but due to no place to stay or job they will hold me until I complete my sentence. Please someone out there, give me a hand finding these basics. I'm willing to relocate outside of NC. My hobbies are photography, theatre, nights on the water, cooking. I have a good sense of humor and am fairly intelligent. Can't write other prisoners. James REAVIS, Rt 2 Box 137, Creswell NC 27928.

I'm a 34 yr old Black gay male who have lost touch completely with old 'friends' after 6 years in here. Getting out in '89. It is very lonesome in here because I have no gay friends who I can relate to cause gay people can understand each other better. I reach out for communication with you with appreciation. I like to watch sports and music and I'm very open minded and like conversation with another gay person. I'm a quiet type and like to dress young. Thank you. Barney Frank ELLIS, EF-136063, A-1 Cell 104, Reidsville GA 30499.



I find GCN to be very enjoyable and helpful in contacting the gay prisoners with the outside world. I have been in prison for 10 years now and have never seen such help for gay prisoners. You will be blessed by our lord one day. Could you please place me in your friendship space. I'm a very compassionate bisexual male looking for a friend. I you can find the strength to be honest with yourself and your feelings and are looking for someone very sincere, please write me. Larry GORDON, 78A 3841, A-3-338, Drawer B, Stormville NY 12582.

I was involved in AIDS testing years ago before it became so widespread. I'm in prison now for a crime I didn't commit. I'm shocked that researchers aren't trying methods of curing just because they aren't approved by FDA. I will be glad to answer questions and be a penpal. Can't receive mail [directly] from other prisoners. Roger JASKE, 1983-15-6D, Box 30, Pendleton IN 46064.

I would appreciate anything you could do to guide me along the road to finding a good penpal. I assure you that I am not requesting your services for financial gain. All I truly desire is a good friend. Prison can be an awful experience without good friends. Valdemar SCHMIDT, 22853, Box 100, Jean NV 89026.

I have been in prison for some years now and people tend to forget about us: out of sight, out of mind, as the old saying goes. Could you please put me in touch with someone to be penpals. I'm young and well hung and very lonely. Harry LANGERT, 82A 0167, Drawer B, Stormville NY 12582.



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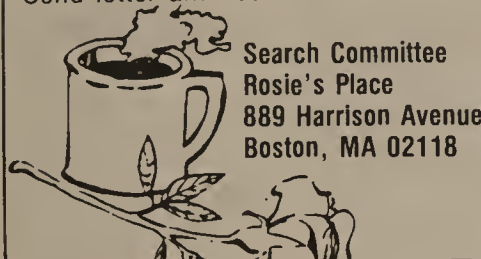
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F sought for apt. on Camb./Belmont line. Parking, laundry avail. near bus. Newly-painted; "rugged." No smoke/drugs. Rent \$300+ call 864-4314. Avail. immed. (44)

ARTIST WITH CATS

GF and 2 cats seek roommate for large bdrm in 2bdrm apt. New renov hwdw floors, w/d, d/w, smkr okay. Avail. June 1st \$400 incl heat. Linden nr Hvd and Comm. Call Deborah 787-0669. (43)

TRY GCN'S GUARANTEED ROOMMATE AD

GCN's "Guaranteed Roommate" offer: ALL ROOMMATE AND HOUSEMATE ADS THAT ARE PREPAID FOR TWO WEEKS WE WILL RUN UNTIL YOU FIND A ROOMMATE

Ads will not be automatically renewed. You must call in every additional week you want the ad to run. Phone calls will be accepted all day Mondays and Tuesdays until noon. 426-4469

ROOMMATE WANTED

Prof LF sks F 28+ prof/grad nonsmoker without pets for lovely 2BR apt in E. Arlington. Quiet street near T. Avail 7/1/88. 641-3308. (44)

CAMBRIDGEPORT

LF or GM sought for feminist semi-coop of mixed race and gender (we are currently 3 women + 2 men). We are semi-veg, non-smoking, and allergic to cats. Sense of humor a plus! Call 864-1466. (45)

Three GM seek fourth to share large apt. in J.P. Minutes to arboretum and Orange Line. Three porches. Great neighborhood. \$250 plus utilities. Call 524-8682. (43)

SUMMER IN SOMERVILLE

LF and cat seek LF for 2 BR near Union/Porter Sq. Sundeck. Near T and bus. \$325+ avail. now. call Sue T. H:623-1835, W:864-9200. (44)

Sunny Somerville Home. Two LFs seek two more for June 1st. Garden, spaciaous rooms, porches. Semi-coop, semi-veg. Cigarette and furry pet free. Near Davis Square. \$325+. Call 776-0303. (43)

3 cooperative lesbians seek subletter 6/1 to 10/1 (w/option). Medford \$280+ / mo. No pets, smoking, alcohol. Convenient to Davis and Harvard Squares. 391-7474. (43)

LF 32 sks LF 28+ to share beaut. Roslin. home bordering arboretum. Must be good humored, respons., down-to-earth. Short term ok. 325-5951. Leave message. (43)

Friendly responsible LF seeks same 30+ for large dyke-owned Somerville apt. Avail. immed. Pets, cigarettes (I don't smoke) weird food cravings, all negotiable \$350/mo plus utils. Avail. immed. 625-6364. Leave message. (43)

Small room in warm clean apartment for gay man interested in natural foods, cooking with other gay men. Monthly rent is \$135+! Call Ed 522-2184 (J.P.) (43)

LF 29 seeks responsible LF 25+ to share very spacious, nice 2 floor apartment in Somerville, avail. 6/1. No smoking. \$300/mo plus utilities. Call Lisa 628-2279. (43)

J.P. APARTMENT

LF 31 and cat seek LF 27+ for spacious J.P. apt. in gay-owned house. Porches, yard, near both T's. No smoking, min. alcohol/drugs. \$375+, avail. 6/1. Call Judy 524-7917 (43)

2LF seek 1LF to share large, quiet friendly home on Belmont-Cambridge line. Non-smoking vegetarian housemate preferred. 295+ call Debra, Bonnie 484-1553. (43)

HOUSING WANTED

DESPERATELY SEEKING HOUSING IN NY

BL 30, with 10-year-old dog. Looking for 1 Bedroom in NYC price range \$750-950. Good leads? (401) 273-1657. (45)

HELP!

Middle-aged lesbian couple and 2 cats seek 2BR apt. in quiet/safe neighborhood in Brookline, Watertown, Belmont, Arlington, or Cambridge near MBTA. Prefer upper floor of duplex or 3 fam. Dream list: frpl, w/d hookup, screened porch. 7/1, \$800 max. Lynn, 266-2257 days, 536-1024 eve. (43)

APARTMENTS

SUMMER SUBLET

Spacious 2BR apt in Dorchester near T. June 1-Oct. 1. Sublet 1RM or whole apt. Pets ok. 475.00/mo. 436-6191. (43)

FOR RENT CAMBRIDGE

Six room sunny apartment with fireplace, porch, hardwood floors in lesbian-owned house. \$1000/month. Available 6/15. 868-1553. (43)

APARTMENT FOR RENT — NAHANT

Smack on ocean with panoramic views of Boston skyline. Spacious 2 bedroom apartment in 3 fam. house. Dishwasher, kitchen, large bathroom, hardwood floors. Porches, yard, parking all included. Excellent condition. Available 6/1 \$860 plus heat. 338-6969 weekdays. (43)

2 choice apts, Jones Hill Dorchester, June & July. Glorious all new 1 bdrm, oak floors, 2 bays, wood, \$585 + (new) heat. Effie has sundeck, skylights, \$485 incl all. Air, trees, view, peace and parking. Lesbian owned, 436-2583. (44)

SUMMER RENTALS

PROVINCETOWN

Summer rental, fully-equipped 2 bedroom condo with water view. Located in quiet East End. Walk out front to Bay Beach and 1 mile walk to downtown. Has own parking. Rent by week or month. For particulars call (617) 447-4922. (46)

FOR SALE

CONDO'S FOR SALE ROXBURY, FT. HILL

Newly renov. three family. Off-street parking and yard. 3BDR 2BTH 1200+ sq ft \$158K; 2BDR, 1 BTH, \$128K; 2BR, 1BTH, 3rd FLR, \$134K. All units have new decks, siding, roof, elec., plumbing, windows, kitchens, baths, wall to wall carpet. By owner 442-7607. (46)

NEAR RITZ

515 sq. ft. condo with sleeping loft. Former library in historic home boasts elegant original walnut paneling, working fireplace, hardwood floors, excellent storage. \$179,000. Barbara H.M.H. Real Estate 734-1400. (43)

VACATIONS

BLUEBERRY COVE

Alternative coastal vacation cabins, camping, boats, veggy/fish workshops. For brochure write Blueberry Cove, HCR35 Box 520, Tenants Harbour ME 04860. (207) 372-6353. (1)

GREENWOOD FARM

Vermont's only Lesbian owned & operated guest house/farm. Special Spring offer, 3 nights for price of 2. Horseback riding, baby goats, gorgeous views, privacy. Call (802) 533-7772. (43)

Provincetown's Watership Inn: Charming guest house near beach and center of gay resort. Free continental breakfast and parking. Brochure Box 918 Provincetown, MA, 02657. (617) 487-0094. (46)

OGUNQUIT MAINE — THE HERITAGE

Walk to the beach. New Victorian bed and breakfast. Non-smoking, recoverers welcome — reasonable. PO Box 1295, Ogunquit, Maine, 03907. (39.41.43)

DISCOVER NEW ENGLAND'S GAY INN

Spend long, lazy days by the pool and cool nights by a crackling fire or in our hot tub. Our 100 acre mountain setting offers peace, privacy, beautiful views, spectacular sunsets and lovely paths for walking hand-in-hand. Great hiking, reduced rate golf, tennis, antiquing and summer theater nearby. *The Highlands Inn*, PO Box 118G, Bethlehem, NH 03574. (603) 869-3978. Grace and Judi, Inkeepers. (16.7)

ORGANIZATIONS

BLACK AND WHITE MEN TOGETHER

Multiracial group for all people. Call (415) 431-1976 or write BWMT, suite 140, 580 Castro St. SF, CA, 94114. (16.1)

JEWISH LESBIAN DAUGHTERS OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

We meet for support & networking and welcome contact from other *Jewish Lesbian Daughters of Holocaust Survivors*. The next meeting is scheduled for April 22nd-24th, in upstate New Hampshire, and semi-annually thereafter. A *partners group* has also been formed for lesbian women who are in relationship with JLDHS. Membership is not dependent on both partners. For information, write Box 6194, Boston, MA 02114 or call (617) 321-4254. (15.49)

OLDER LESBIAN ENERGY

Social and support group for women over 40. P.O. Box 1214, East Arlington, MA 02174. (15.48)

DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS

Support organization for lesbians, 1151 Mass Ave, Camb. OCBC. Raps every Tues, Thurs at 8pm. Special raps for 35+, parents, ynger women, baby boomers, singles, coming out, issues forum. All 8pm. Monthly events, outing club, library. Info: 661-3633. All women invited

PUBLICATIONS

BLACK/OUT

The new quarterly magazine from the National coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays, features news, views, reviews, poetry, short fiction and announcements of interest to the national Black Lesbian and Gay community. Sample copy, \$4, 1 yr. subscription, (4 issues) \$10. To: Black/Out, NCBLG, P.O. Box 2490, Washington, DC 20013. (ex)

LESBIAN CONTRADICTION

A Journal of Irreverent Feminism. Quarterly of commentary, analysis, reviews, cartoons & humor by and for women who agree to disagree—who are still political, but not necessarily correct. Sample \$1; sub \$5; more if/less if. LesCon, 584 Castro, #263G, SF, CA 94114. (16.--)

GUARDIAN: Independent radical newsweekly. Covers Gay, women and minority struggles and international progressive movements. Special offer—4 issues FREE. Write Guardian, Dept GCN, 33W 17th St. NY, NY, 10011. (ex)

off our backs

Celebrating 15 years of radical feminist journalism. We bring feminist national/international news analysis and reviews each month. \$11 year, 11 issues. (\$15 for contributing subs) \$20 institutional fee. Sample-\$3 for 3 issues! Write 'off our backs' Dept GCN, 1841 Columbia Rd. NW, Room 212 Washington, DC 20009. (ex)

OUTRAGEOUS WOMEN

National journal of woman-to-woman S/M. Diverse feminist quarterly of S/M fact, fiction and photos. \$11/yr. Single issues \$3. Must state you are over 18. SASE for info. PO Box 23, Somerville MA 02143. (ex)

Safer Sex and Drug Use Guidelines

Assessing individual risk for AIDS and other illnesses is the first step towards using safer sex and drug use guidelines. Only you and your partner(s) can decide how much risk is acceptable — take stock of your sexual and drug use histories.

Be aware that the highest concentrations of HIV (the virus widely thought to cause AIDS) are found in blood and semen. The most common routes of HIV transmission are through sharing needles and unprotected anal or vaginal intercourse.

GCN's guidelines come from a wide variety of sources aimed at various communities concerned about the AIDS epidemic and health in general. We want to confront the prevailing "no sex is best" attitude and present an approach that is as sex-positive as possible.

Information for gay male, lesbian and bisexual communities

Safer sex can include: massage, hugging, kissing, erotic talk, phone sex, masturbation (solo, pairs and groups), using your own vibrators, dildos or other sex toys and s/m, butch/fem role-playing, fantasy scenes, bondage and other activities that do not involve the exchange of semen or blood (including menstrual blood).

Do not allow a partner's semen or blood (including menstrual blood and blood drawn from piercing, cutting or shaving) to enter your vagina, anus, mouth or breaks in your skin.

Use condoms for fucking (anal and vaginal intercourse), for licking/sucking penises and for covering dildos and other sex toys. Use water-based lubricants. Use latex barriers (dental dams or other plastic/latex materials) between the genital area and mouth when licking/sucking cunts and assholes. Be especially careful to avoid the exchange of menstrual blood. Using nonoxynol-9 or other spermicides with condoms and latex barriers may add extra protection.

For finger-fucking or fisting (anal or vaginal

PUBLICATIONS

BAD ATTITUDE

A lesbian sex magazine. Irreverent and Hot! \$10 for one year's subscription (3 issues). B.A. Inc., P.O. Box 110, Cambridge, MA 02139. (16.33)

WOMAN OF POWER: "A Magazine of Feminism, Spirituality, and Politics," an inspiring international quarterly publication. Subscriptions \$22 for 4 issues; singles issues \$6 plus \$1 postage. P.O. Box 827, Cambridge, MA 02238, telephone (617) 625-7885. (ex)

ON OUR BACKS, the sexual entertainment magazine for lesbians, is 48 pages of erotic fiction, features, plus timely sexual advice and news columns. We are quarterly, national, unique and provocative. \$15/yr sub or \$5 current issue to: On Our Backs, PO Box 421916, San Francisco, CA 94142. (ex)

Community Jobs

The only nationwide listing of socially conscious job opportunities — organizing, women's issues, health care, peace/justice, more. \$12/year. CJ, Box G, 1516 P Street, Washington, DC 20005. (Ex)

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penetration with fingers or hands), use latex gloves or finger cots. Use water-based lubricants.

Alternative insemination may put you at risk. Be sure to discuss risk for AIDS with potential donors or sperm bank.

Be aware that some risk of exposure to immune-suppressing infections (such as mono and amoebiasis) may be associated with rimming (anal-oral contact) — use a latex barrier. Risk may also be associated with watersports (urine) or feces in the mouth, rectum or in open cuts. If you share dildos, vibrators or other sex toys, use condoms or clean toys with hydrogen peroxide.

Your body's ability to fight all disease, including AIDS and its related illnesses (such as Kaposi's Sarcoma and pneumocystis carinii pneumonia), may be benefitted by general good health — good nutrition, lots of rest, exercise and nonabuse of alcohol, poppers and other drugs.

If you use IV drugs, follow the guidelines below.

Intravenous drug use

Do not share works (needles, syringes, droppers, spoons, cottons or cookers).

Do not re-use needles; use fresh cottons each time.

If you must share or re-use your works, clean them as follows: dip needle and works into 100 percent bleach, draw up and release three times, dip needle and works into water, draw up and release three times (in an emergency, rubbing alcohol, vodka or wine can also be used). As an alternative, boil works in water for at least fifteen minutes. Use a fresh solution each time you clean your works.

Resource phone numbers

National AIDS Hotline: 1 (800) 342-7514
AIDS Action Committee (AAC), Boston: (617) 437-7733
AIDS Action Committee (AAC) IV Drug Use Taskforce, Boston: (617) 437-4200
Gay Men's Health Cnsis (GMHC), New York: (212) 807-6655
National Minority AIDS Council (NMAC), Washington, D.C.: (202) 544 1076
Women's AIDS Network, San Francisco. (415) 864-4376

HELP WANTED

Goodlooking Italian man
Clean and safe
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(617) 739-7832
COPLEY SQUARE

Multicultural advocacy group seeks dynamic secretary with 6-12 months experience/training. 45 WPM typing; WP a plus. Strong phone skills. Advancement a possibility. Liberal vacation, plus benefits. Apply by 6/2. Call 357-8507 or write Terry Heide, NCAS, 100 Boylston St., #737, Boston, 02116. Minorities/M and F encouraged to apply. Equal Opportunity Employer. (44)

All positions require left politics and strong collective skills. Call or write: **Red Sun Press, 94 Green St., Boston, MA 02130, (617)524-6822.**

HELP WANTED

Staff Builders
18 Tremont Street
Boston, MA 02116

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Calendar

21 SATURDAY TO 29 SUNDAY



22 Sunday ☐ **Frida**, a film about artist/feminist/communist Frida Kahlo.

Somerville Theatre, 55 Davis Sq. (also 5/23-24) Info: 625-1084.

21 Saturday

Boston ☐ **Disappearing Act** performs 7:30pm Thurs. through Sat.; 1pm & 7:30pm on Sundays through 5/29. Club Cafe, 209 Columbus Ave. \$14-\$27.50. Info: 536-0966.

Jamaica Plain ☐ **United Fruit Company** presents "I Am What I Wear." Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays through 5/22. Eliot Hall, 6 Eliot St. 8pm. \$5, \$8, \$10, \$20. Info: 547-7728.

Boston ☐ Triangle Theatre Company presents "**Torch Song Trilogy**," playing Thursdays through Saturdays until 6/4. Paramount Penthouse Theatre, 58 Berkeley St. 7:30. \$15. Info: 426-3550.

Boston ☐ "**Anita: Dances of Vice**," a film by Rosa von Praunheim. Nightly through 5/24. ICA, 955 Boylston St. 7pm. \$4.50, \$3.50. Info: 266-5151.

Somerville ☐ **Patty Larkin** in concert. Also featuring **Buskin & Batteau**. Somerville Theatre, 55 Davis Sq. 8 & 10:30pm. \$11.50-\$14.50. Info: 625-1081.

Keene, NH ☐ **AIDS Spring Conference '88** — "A Time for Healing." Guest speakers, all welcome. First Baptist Church, 105 Maple Ave. 9:30am-1pm. \$5. Info: 603/357-5544.

Belmont ☐ **Seven Sister College** Lesbian Alumnae Network holds fifth monthly social gathering. 7:30pm. \$5. Info: 964-0767.

Boston ☐ **Book-signing with Don Clark**, author of "The New Loving Someone Gay." Glad Day Bookshop, 673 Boylston St. 3-5pm. Info: 267-3010.

Boston ☐ **Prime Timers** safety net party: "Are You Feeling Safe Sex Anxiety?" Jeff Epperly, speaker. All older gay males invited. Lindemann Health Center, 25 Staniford St. 2-4pm.

Jamaica Plain ☐ "**An Evening with Crazy Cle and Friends**," a Caribbean party featuring the dance of the Cle Douglas Dance Troupe, music, food, and comedy. Wheelchair accessible. Firehouse Multicultural Arts Center, 659 Centre St. 8pm. \$6. Info: 524-3816.

Cambridge ☐ **Kate Alicechild**, "Pointing to the Moon." Reading of poetry and performance of original monologue. New Words Bookstore basement, 186 Hampshire St. 8:30pm. \$3. Info: 876-5310.

Boston ☐ **Living With AIDS Theatre Project** presents a workshop to collect the experiences and stories of those connected in any way with the AIDS crisis every Saturday. The goal is to create a theater music piece based on the workshop material. No performance experience necessary. Club Cabaret, 209 Columbus Ave. 10:30am.

Boston ☐ "**AIDS in Prison: A Look beyond the Walls**." Bring bag lunch. Old South Church, 645 Boylston St., 4th floor. 10am-4:30pm. \$10. Info: 742-6830.

Boston ☐ "Getting Well, Staying Healthy" **Wholistic Therapies Conference** for individuals concerned about AIDS and AIDS-related conditions. Presentations, workshops, opportunity to sample massage techniques. Quincy School, 885 Washington St. 9am-5pm. \$20. Info: 348-1025.

Cambridge ☐ **Ronnie Gilbert & Odetta** in concert together for the first time. Sanders Theater, Corner of Cambridge and Quincy Sts. 8pm. Info: 661-1252.

22 Sunday

Boston ☐ Metro Healing presents **ongoing healing group** for PWAs and all those wishing to be of support. Meets every Sunday. Metropolitan Health Club aerobics room, 209 Columbus Ave. 7:30-9:30pm. Info: Brian 267-1154, Joseph 357-6926.

Boston ☐ Picnic, live music, comedy, and events for kids at a **Festival Celebrating Veterans Peace Convoy to Nicaragua**. Boston Common. 2-6pm. Free. Info: 492-8699.

Boston ☐ "**Boston Band Aid**" — celebrate Gay Pride a little early at a support party for Boston's **Lesbian and Gay Freedom Trail Band**. At Luxor, 69 Church St. near Arlington St. T. 7-9pm. Info: Mike 787-0428.

Boston ☐ BUUGL (Boston Unitarian Universalist Gays and Lesbians) **Memorial Day Service on AIDS**: "A Celebration of Our Dead and Our Living." Arlington St. Church. 7pm. Info: Lori 547-5209.

Northampton ☐ A taped copy of the February 9 **Oprah Winfrey Show** with dykes will be shown, followed by discussion period. New Alexandria Lesbian Library. 3pm. \$3. Info: 413/584-7616.

Cambridge ☐ **Spring Chamber Music Concert** to benefit Greater Boston Lesbian and Gay Political Alliance. Works by Handel, Schubert, Beethoven, Gustav and Alma Mahler, Bartok, and Chausson. Paine Hall, Harvard U. 8pm. \$7. Info: 661-3661, 265-0348.

Salem ☐ Fifth Annual **Spring Auction** to benefit the North Shore Gay & Lesbian Alliance. 10% of proceeds to be donated to the AIDS Action Committee. Cash bar, light menu. McGowan's Restaurant, East India Sq. Doors open at 6:30pm, auction begins at 7:30. Info: 745-3848.

Cambridge ☐ **D. Merilee Clunis** celebrates the publication of her new book, co-authored with G. Dorsey Green, "**Lesbian Couples**." All welcome. New Words, 186 Hampshire St. 3-5pm. Free. Info: 876-5310.

Boston ☐ Victorian Society in America, New England Chapter sponsors a **walking tour of the South End**. Leader: Stephen Jerome. Meet at Back Bay Station of the Orange Line, near Dartmouth St. entrance. 1pm. \$3. Info: 354-6891.

Boston ☐ **Boston's Other Voice** special guest Jackie Gelb, co-coordinator of the Names Project, speaks about the quilt and its arrival in Boston on June 16. WROR 98.5FM. 11:30pm (new time).

Somerville ☐ **Frida**, a film about Mexican artist/feminist/communist Frida Kahlo. Somerville Theatre, 55 Davis Sq. Shows at 2, 4, 6, 8, 10pm. (Also 5/23-24, no 2pm show) Info: 625-1084.

Boston ☐ **ACT UP/Boston** confronts the Archdiocese of Boston and Cardinal Law to protest their inhumane stance on AIDS. Holy Cross Cathedral, 1400 Washington St. 9:45am-12noon. Info: 492-2887.

23 Monday

Cambridge ☐ **Lesbian Rap** topic: "Roles in Relationships." The Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-10pm. Free. Info: 354-8807 (TTY/voice).

25 Wednesday

Cambridge ☐ **Lesbian Al-Anon**. The Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 6:30-8pm. Info: 354-8807 (TTY/voice).

Boston ☐ "**What Is Kinky?**", a discussion topic presented by the Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth (BAGLY). Open to anyone age 22 and under. St. John the Evangelist Church, 35 Bowdoin St. 7:30pm. Free. Info: 482-7858.

Boston ☐ Boston Area Women's Self-defense Collective offers **ongoing classes in self-defense for women** of all ages and abilities. Learn simple and safe techniques for home and street safety. Wednesday evenings and Saturday afternoons in the South End. Info: 574-9433.

Jamaica Plain ☐ **Lesbian and Gay Neighbors** of Jamaica Plain stroll the Arnold Arboretum with helpful guidance. Meet at the main gate entrance on the Arborway. 6-7:30pm. Info: 522-3894.

Roxbury ☐ "**Lesbians and AIDS: A Forum on Medical, Social and Political Issues**." Sponsored by AIDS Action Committee. Roxbury Community College, Rm. 121. 7pm. Info: 437-6200, x216.

Dorchester ☐ **Dorchester GALA Women** pizza and video night at Cindy's. Info: Barbara 282-2962.

Cambridge ☐ "**Say It, Sister**" discusses "The Road to the Feminization of Power and Presidential Politics" with Jennifer Jackman, Pres. of Mass. NOW. WMBR, 88.1FM. 7-8pm.

26 Thursday

Cambridge ☐ **Support Group** for women who have surrendered a child to adoption. Confidential, and open to all women who have surrendered. Meets every Thursday. The Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 6:30-8:30pm. Info: 662-0417.

Boston ☐ The Names Project **Quilting Bee**. Arlington St. Church, Boylston St. entrance. 6-9pm. Info: 451-9003.

Brookline ☐ Boston **Committee to Free Sharon Kowalski** meets to plan for Boston Gay Pride. Come make signs to be carried in parade, watch video of Karen Thompson's latest speech. Wheelchair accessible. Boston Self Help Center, 18 Williston Rd., one block from the intersection of Beacon and Washington Sts. Info: 783-3580; for TTY call Mass Relay at 254-4160.

27 Friday

Cambridge ☐ **Women's Coffeehouse**: CASA film series "Look at My People — See How They Struggle," a video from within the Salvadoran movement focusing on the COMADRES. Spanish with subtitles. The Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-10pm. Free. Info: 354-8807 (TTY/voice).

Jamaica Plain ☐ **Linda Waterfall and Sara Laughs** perform at the Firehouse Multicultural Arts Center, 659 Centre St. 8pm. \$7. Info: 524-3816.

Cambridge ☐ CASA sponsors "**Contras, Cocaine and the CIA: Just Say NO!**", talks by Martha Honey and Abbie Hoffman. Science Center B, Harvard U., 1 Oxford St. 7:30pm. \$3. Info: 492-8699.

Worcester ☐ **AIDS Project** — Worcester **support group** meets every Friday night for HIV positive, PWA's, PWARC's, lovers, friends, and the worried well. Open to all lesbians and gay men regardless of HIV status. 51 Jackson St. 7-9pm. Info: Dana, 755-3773.

Boston ☐ **Ongoing healing group** for PWAs and all those wishing to be of support. Meets every Friday. Santa Fe Hair Salon, 528 Tremont St. 7:30-9:30pm. Info: Brian 267-1154, Joseph 357-6926.

28 Saturday

Portland, ME ☐ **Maine Lesbian and Gay Pride Parade** steps off at 3pm from City Hall Plaza. Rally in Deering Oaks following. Info: 207/883-6934.

Boston ☐ **Educational Forums on Health and Human Rights in Central America**. National Public Health professionals and representatives of several Central American Countries speak on health and human rights in Central America, the Occupied Territories, South Africa and Malaysia. Harvard School of Public Health, The Kresge Building, 677 Huntington Ave. 9:30am-5pm. \$10. Info: 489-3386.

Jamaica Plain ☐ **Agbekor Drum and Dance Ensemble** performs traditional African music and dance, with a segment for audience participation. Firehouse Multicultural Arts Center, 659 Centre St. 8pm. \$7. Info: 524-3816.

29 Sunday

Boston ☐ **Boston's Other Voice** special guest attorney Vin McCarthy tells why we should vote for Mike Dukakis. WROR 98.5FM. 11:30pm.

Boston ☐ **Rock Against Sexism May Disc Party/T-Dance**. 1270 Club, 1270 Boylston St. 6-10pm. \$2. 21 and older.

Boston ☐ **Metro Healing**, see 5/22 listing.

CALENDAR COMPILED BY
TODD HOLLISTER

By Rex Wockner

John O'Brien lives in Los Angeles now. But on a hot, late June night in 1969 he was outside the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar on Christopher Street in New York City's Greenwich Village. The police showed up at the bar that night, as they did on many other nights in the late '60s, to harass fags and make a few arrests.

But on this June 24th, the day of Judy Garland's funeral, something broke loose. Rather than run off to keep from getting arrested, the patrons of the Stonewall decided on a showdown with the police. They fought back. It turned into a riot. More riots followed on succeeding nights.

Many lesbians and gay men consider Stonewall the beginning of the modern gay liberation movement, because what happened on June 24th was the first public expression of the idea that being gay wasn't something you had to run away from.

The following interview took place in February in Washington, D.C.

Rex: We've come a long ways since 1969, haven't we?

John: Well, we've come a great distance and, it's a cliché, but we still have a long way to go. The people who engaged in the Stonewall rebellion had no idea what the significance of the event would be. No one expected to see gay and lesbian bands, choruses, softball leagues, community centers, support networks and groups in every part of the country. Nor did we foresee a march of 600,000 people on Washington.

I felt okay with being gay at that time but I didn't feel good about it. I wasn't aware of my history and identity as a gay person. Stonewall continued that process for me. It wasn't a beginning, for me or the gay movement. Our people have had organizations for decades, valiantly fighting in small numbers. But Stonewall was set at the end of the '60s, a rebellion period. Many of the people who were active in the Stonewall rebellion were part of the '60s and were affected by the Black civil rights movement. Finally, gay people had enough and were ready to stand up for their rights.

Rex: Distinguish for me — I was 11 years old that summer — the difference between

It was a hot night in June

An interview with John O'Brien, a gay man who was present at the first night of the Stonewall rebellion

POLICE AGAIN ROUT 'VILLAGE' YOUTHS

Outbreak by 400 Follows a Near-Riot Over Raid

Heavy police reinforcements cleared the Sheridan Square area of Greenwich Village again yesterday morning when large crowds of young men, angered by a police raid on an inn frequented by homosexuals, swept through the area.

New York Times headline, June 30, 1969

Stonewall as history and Stonewall as myth. **John:** Well, we formed the Gay Liberation Front in New York before Stonewall — several of us who were in SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) and others who just hung out on Christopher Street. There was a group called Mattachine Society at that time, but we identified ourselves more with the '60s protests and felt there was a need to be more militant and aggressive. Stonewall happened to occur at that time and place. There had been a series of police raids up and down the street. Several bars were closed. A couple [of gay] people were murdered. It was an election year and people knew that if they were going to close one popular bar today, it would be another one the next day. There was a lot of anger and pent-up rage.

There was a lot more violence at Stonewall than has ever been reported and, at the same time, an overexaggeration of the role of certain people. There weren't as many drag queens as you've heard. There were a couple. There weren't too many women. There were a few. Some of the people who took part were straight. The Stonewall bar was not far from Eighth Street and Sixth Avenue, which was a very popular hang-out for radicals. When word

spread that there was a police disturbance down the street, a number of those people naturally gravitated to the spot. Some of the people participating in the riots were not familiar with the inside of the bar.

But it was a period when the police were the enemy; they were called "pigs." It was natural for the people from Eighth Avenue and Sixth Street to know how to interact with the police in a street action. After the initial events inside the bar, the action moved outside. The police would be chasing up and down the street and the kids [straight radicals] would come back; it was a question of knowing how to maneuver. Very few of the bar people knew how to maneuver the police, so it was up to the radicals who had some experience.

There were around 300 windows broken, a number of fires set, cars overturned, parking meters uprooted. Across the street, in the park, a section of an iron fence was simply ripped out. The rage that was there for people to physically take parking meters out of the sidewalk shows a kind of anger and fear and hatred that's hard to describe. It was really a visual thing. People's hurt and anger and pent-up frustrations gave them the adrenalin. That was basically the

whole weekend.

Afterwards, there was essentially a rule that the police could not go on Christopher Street, and the police stayed off of Christopher Street until 1972. They knew their mere presence would start immediate trouble. It was a period when there were two gay marches on the police station. We went into the police station.

Our activism is not yet back to this point, but what I am excited about is that ACT UP/New York and a number of similar groups around the country now have that kind of energy again. It's going to generate a lot more activists and a lot of movement forward. Politicians are complacent toward us because they don't think we're going to do much ourselves. They think they know how far we'll go. We must cease being predictable. It's been our unpredictability, our setting the agendas and the places and the issues, that have advanced us.

The Gay Liberation Front grew not only in New York but all over the country. I went to Boston, New Haven, Cleveland, Louisville and helped start Gay Liberation Fronts there. We went to the bars, we passed out flyers about holding a meeting someplace. A lot of the bar owners didn't like it but we were able to attract people in each city and they were able to start groups. We went from 40 organizations to 800 organizations in a very short time.

What's interesting is that now the gay community looks back and praises Stonewall, but the Mattachine Society opposed the Stonewall Rebellion. It had members outside fingering people out to the police. It tried everything to sabotage our marches after Stonewall. The bar Julius — which was down the street from the Stonewall — held three of our people for the police. The customers were outraged and incensed that we were fighting the police.

The mentality of many of the gay leaders in 1969 was that Stonewall set our movement back. If you go back and look in the *Advocate*, you'll see that.

Rex: ACT UP is getting some of the same response now.

John: ACT UP has been more responsible than any of the national groups for influence. Continued on page 11

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